EMMANUEL TODD

THE FINAL FALL

AN ESSAY ON THE DECOMPOSITION OF THE SOVIET SPHERE

"The Communist system manipulates men and splits them in two, setting up strict distinctions between official 'Socialist' or 'Communist' man and real man. While the former is, at least in theory, infused with happiness and good will, the latter desperately tries to join his sundered self, curses the system, and sometimes revolts against it. The economic duality of the Communist system, the coexistence of state planning and the black market, perfectly expresses the duality of Communist man." (THE FINAL FALL, pp. 116-17)

The USSR has defied the scientific spirit of Marx and thus constructed a "perfect" society in name only (a "crystal palace"). In the name of freedom, equality, and social justice, the USSR has created a society based on class oppression and exploitation. From the radicalism of Stalin, the reformism of Krushchev, and the cynicism of Brezhnev, Todd recounts the steady erosion of their Marxist claims by the social and economic realities they so cavalierly discard. Until now . . . when the pretense to Marxism is so patently false that even it poses a threat to the system.

The bureaucracy, police, and military are not merely necessary to protect an inherently unstable system, they are the system. The exploitation and oppression are essential to support the massive, parasitic bureaucracy. The parallel economy or black market—a free economy that adjusts itself to actual conditions—sustains the official economy. And the fruit of economic reform in the satellite countries pays for the Soviet military presence that oppresses them.

Dualism is fundamental to Soviet society, yet the tensions it involves can only worsen. THE FINAL FALL presents a thorough analysis of the pressures for change within the USSR. Can the Soviet Union stumble on indefinitely? Is internal reform possible? If so, under what circumstances? What role can the U.S. play in encouraging reform?

Using sociological data and examples from literature and film, THE FINAL FALL illuminates the popular mood within the USSR and satellite countries that promises to be critical in the future, if any, of the USSR.

EMMANUEL TODD

THE FINAL FALL

AN ESSAY ON THE DECOMPOSITION OF THE SOVIET SPHERE

TRANSLATED BY JOHN WAGGONER

PREFACE BY JEAN-FRANÇOIS REVEL

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PREFACE

Jean-François Revel

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The autumn of 1976 witnessed the publication in France of *The Final Fall,* the first book of a young, unknown writer, Emmanuel Todd. Todd was in fact a student at the time, since he was in the process of finishing his doctoral dissertation.

He is an historian specializing in historical demography—a fact essential to understanding his approach in this book. As he himself says, demography is one of the few social sciences (if not the only social science) that can really be considered a science and where mathematical formalism is something more than packaging. It should also be noted that Todd was trained in both France and England. (He defended his dissertation at Cambridge.) This double apprenticeship may explain, at least in part, why he was able to break loose from both the French and English intellectual routines of political analysis. Europeans are still puttering around with the problems of Marxism, socialism, the Soviet Union, and totalitarianism, because they are trying to solve them in the dogmatic and religious language that gave rise to them. Having a political tradition somewhat removed from these problems, the British and the Americans view them more coolly. However, as a result, they underestimate the irrational factors and slight continental Europe's tremendous emotional investment in these terms. Since he is familiar with both of these mentalities, Emmanuel Todd is quite aware that he is tackling a world where passions reign supreme. But in the rigor with which he brings rationality to that world, he remains inflexible.

So it turns out that the observers of, and the actors in, the French "literary scene" were not wrong. (It is interesting to note that when a really original work appears, a kind of secret click is triggered, which promptly notifies the augurs that an important work has surfaced, even before the reviews have appeared or the PR campaigns have been launched. The faint sounds of a flute, heard from backstage, suddenly stop the powerful orchestra of the Establishment. The latter perks up its ears and listens without saying a word—

sometimes condescendingly, but often with sympathy and gratitude. A new idea is so rare!) With that cannibalism which intellectual curiosity has become today, the radio and TV networks and the "Op-Ed" page of the *New York Times* pounced on the frail Emmanuel Todd. But he did not perish. To the contrary, he was in fact "confirmed" (as the Catholics say) by the bishop of his diocese, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, the eminent historian and professor at the Collège de France, who wrote a spectacular article about him published on the front page of *Le Monde*—an article in which Ladurie baptized him "the Eliakim of Sovietology." (One will recall that in the Bible, and in Racine's tragedy, *Athalie,* Eliakim was a character who impressed people as much by his youth as by his wisdom.) And at the same time, Raymond Aron, dean of the Sacred College of Sociologists, uttered the words: *"Dignus est intrare."**

But not only the pontiffs were interested: the public had (and spontaneously) begun reading *The Final Fall* even before it was recommended to them; so that the pontiffs were not only interested but intrigued.

And so, in an age when we tend to overestimate the power of the media, promotion campaigns, and PR devices, it is reassuring to note that real talent itself can be a recipe for success. *The Final Fall* is first of all enjoyable reading—a stimulating, witty book with penetrating and amusing vignettes that are often more informative than lengthy analyses.

The novelty of Emmanuel Todd's book lies chiefly in the originality of his method. Like most new ideas, his are at once obvious and completely unexpected. It is unexpected because, in order to study the USSR or any other contemporary closed society, we must approach them *as if we were studying societies of the past*—and past meaning before the eighteenth century; that is, before the beginnings of that social, economic, and statistical data collected by scholars.

Actually, we do not have many more resources for studying the Soviet Union than we have for studying the Roman Empire. The Roman statistics either never existed or were destroyed; and the Soviet statistics are false. So we must begin from scratch, as if they never existed. We cannot stroll through the Roman Empire to see

*The phrase comes from Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire,* where it is uttered by the imbecilic professors of medicine by way of granting the M.D. degree to candidates deemed "worthy of entering into" their learned company. (Trans.)

with our own eyes how people lived; nor can we talk freely with Sicilian peasants of Tiberius' time: a time machine has simply not yet been invented. Nor, by the same token, can we move freely through the USSR or China, though for a different reason; namely, because nine-tenths of their territories are forbidden to foreigners, and even on authorized tours for tourists, contacts with local inhabitants are either prohibited or strictly controlled by the police.

Thus, the closed societies of our day can only be deciphered by the same criteria used for the societies of the past: quantitative and unalterable data. This category includes demographic statistics which provide us with much more than just information on the population level of a society, but on its frame of mind as well. Another kind of statistics, which is dependable, because it can be verified, is on Soviet foreign trade and its volume, its breakdown and its financing: exports of raw materials, imports of foodstuffs and manufactured products—imports largely financed by loans on the capitalist finance market or by low-interest credits granted by the Western nations, which brought the Eastern European debt up to some 50 billion dollars as of early 1977. Such features define an underdeveloped economy, but one which underlies an advanced military technology and a society with a high degree of literacy.

Is Soviet society stable, or is it breaking down? People are always talking about the crisis of capitalism. But the fact that the crisis of the Soviet system can be almost completely hidden from the outside world does not stop it from existing, or from producing fall-out in the non-communist systems. In this respect, Todd makes a distinction between the Soviet *State* proper and the Soviet *sphere,* which also includes the peripheral republics—the satellites in particular. The breakdown is double: decay within the USSR and decay resulting from the widening gap between the Soviet society and the satellite societies. That such a gap exists is proven by yet another irrefutable fact available to us: the ban on travel by ordinary Soviet citizens not only to the West but even to the people's democracies. In general, moreover, there can be only one reason why Soviet society is closed: it is aware of its own weakness and vulnerability and seeks to protect itself by self-imposed quarantine.

Thus, totalitarian power imposes on such a society a fake stability, veneered on it by means of terrorist pressure. The conclusion that this society is closed because it is weak does not flow from a subjective appraisal or from a garbled statistic. A country may hide, but

it cannot hide the fact that it is hiding. This is an observation that we can build on. And similar observations lead us to a diagram of the social classes in the USSR, and of the class struggle there. In this way, little by little, we elaborate a *system*—a system based on solid, converging structural elements. (Another such element—difficult but not impossible to come by—could, for example, be provided by calculating the proportion of the voting, tax-paying population in the employ of the political police.) Once equipped with this system, we can gauge the worth of individual testimony that is not quantifiable, or has not been quantified.

The information available on our contemporary world—even on the totalitarian countries—is much more than we know how to utilize. In order to put that information to use, two conditions must be met. The first is a real wish to know the truth. This wish is uncommon, especially in regard to the totalitarian countries or those that are becoming totalitarian. The second condition that must be met, if we are to give some meaning to the mass of available information, is to build a model that is intellectually sound as well as flexible. In other words, to encourage theoretical research *and* give a scientific orientation to the harvest of new facts.

The Final Fall is one of those very few books in which these two conditions are both met.

translated by Guy Daniels

FOREWORD

John Waggoner

The importance of Emmanuel Todd's book, *The Final Fall,* can be appreciated on a number of levels. To the student of the USSR, Todd presents a coherent analysis of the Soviet system. His provocative conclusions, however, raise issues that go beyond the merely academic concerns of political scientists and sociologists. Todd's prediction of the more or less imminent breakdown of the Soviet system vitally concerns the millions of people that have been forced to live under Communist rule. On a less obvious level, *The Final Fall* is a response to the contemporary crisis in the West, which, following the demoralization of the sixties, has increasingly pervaded the public consciousness. The book may be said to have been written with a view to that crisis, diagnosed by Solzhenitsyn and others as a loss of conviction and will.

Contrary to the more pessimistic current of this thought, Todd sees the West as facing grave challenges, but as still possessing tremendous vitality. Our perspective on the West, he would maintain, can only be complete with an adequate understanding of the Soviet Union, an understanding that *The Final Fall* endeavors to provide.

Compared to other less conspicuous happenings of the last decade, Todd rather audaciously claims that Western reverses in Viet Nam comprise what was essentially a "non-event." In the larger context, the Western system is more and more a model for the aspirations of nations in Eastern Europe and in the Third World. Todd sees and blesses a rapprochement not, as Sakharov does, between the US and the USSR, but between the advanced countries of the West and the progressive Communist countries of Eastern Europe.

In arguing for the vitality of the West, Todd's position is at odds with both Solzhenitsyn and the intellectual (Marxist) orthodoxy of France, which molded many of Todd's contemporaries and still continues to exert influence through them and in its own right. But in Todd's France, a new mode of thought is ripening in the minds of a

different generation of thinkers, the "New Philosophers." Both Todd and the New Philosophers have rebelled against the Marxist orthodoxy which prevailed perhaps even more in the academic environment of France in the 1960s than in the US. Yet Todd is unique in seeing capitalism as a real alternative, though there has been evidence of New Philosophers following suit.

It was French thinkers who greatly influenced thought in the US during the 1960s. And it is with interest that we turn to the present generation of thinkers who are formulating their arguments with their teachers. Our interest is reinforced by the critical test that liberal democracy will continue to face in France and the rest of Western Europe.

To say the least, Emmanuel Todd's book is provocative, as the apocalyptic title indicates. The book was written in the aftermath of the oil embargo, which revealed, among other things, the economic vulnerability of the advanced industrial nations. The US had completed its retreat from Southeast Asia. Chastened from its defeat, the US withdrew from the international scene, displaying marked reticence in Africa and elsewhere. At the same time, the prospect of Eurocommunism became credible. Third World countries showed that atomic technology was within their grasp and might be applied in the volatile politics of these regions. When all this was happening, new and untried leaders were called to rule in major Western countries. In the face of considerable anxiety in the West, Todd challenges the view that the global balance of power has shifted from the West and writes of the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union.

According to Todd, the West suffers from illusions of Soviet strengths. He denies a view, attributed to Kissinger, that would equate Russian military power with economic and political strength simply. Contrary to Kissinger, what normally attains in the West cannot serve as the basis of understanding the paradoxes of the Russian situation. At end, Russian military *strength,* which is undisputed, is both the cause and effect of the *weakness* of the Soviet economy.

In directing technology and industry toward the production of military hardware, the Soviet leaders are able to attain maximum control over their country's economic and political situation. The production of such goods is most congruent with the demands of a centralized economy. Liberalization and even a modest reorientation of the economy toward consumer goods would have disastrous con-

sequences for the Kremlin. Decentralization would encourage the development of independent centers of economic and perhaps political power (especially in the outerlying republics) and give rise to dangerous expectations in a now literate population. In the short run, uncontrollable inflation resulting from the lifting of price controls would create serious social unrest. Most important, the ideological legitimacy behind centralization and state authority would be irreparably undermined. At end, circumstances, if not choice, force the Kremlin's economic policy.

But the end result of increasingly heavy military investments is to generally drain the rest of the economy. As the Soviet economy slowly stagnates, more and more manpower is needed to prop up an enervated system. The ranks of the police are swelled, as are those of the military. The build-up of Russian troops is not only a response to the international realities of Europe and the Sino-Soviet border. Forced conscription and military authority serve to defuse the increasing restiveness of youth under conditions of forced labor.

Todd disputes those like Kissinger who might see this Soviet build-up as indicative of ideological resolve on the part of the Soviet leaders. In the final analysis, one can detect a hollow ring to the impressive sound of the USSR's military statistics. According to Todd, the USSR pays dearly for its economy and military prestige. The unloosened grip of a very narrow oligarchy keeps the Soviet Union from true development. More and more, the USSR resembles a Third World nation, not only economically but in outlook. It shares with the Third World its nationalistic and "racist" fervor.

Todd's dispute with Kissinger on this matter may go to the heart of his intention in writing *The Final Fall*. The publication of his work coincides with the demoralization of the West. While Kissinger plots the strategic retreat of the West and the realignment of global power to neutralize increased Soviet strength, Todd maintains that, in the overall picture, such views of Soviet strength are grossly misperceived. Through his provocative thesis on the USSR, Todd implies that the perception of Western weakness may perhaps become an ingredient of policy which leads to actual weakness. Todd would want to reanimate Western policy based on an adequate perception of the Soviet Union.

Formerly, the USSR represented a very real ideological threat to the West. The West, in turn, represented a very real military threat to the USSR. According to Todd, this situation has been reversed. The Western system has proved successful, while the Soviet system is on the point of bankruptcy. The Western way of life attracts; the

repression of Soviet life, which merely serves the interests of a narrow class, repels. The Soviet Union has achieved military dominance, but reflects internal instability more than strength.

Given this new situation, Todd casts doubt on "peaceful coexistence" and its less sober offspring, "detente." Soviet militarism is mandated by the internal dynamics of the present Soviet system. The very existence of the West and what it represents inevitably meets the hostility of the Soviet leaders as a threat to their security. Indeed, security can be had for the men in the Kremlin only if the West is made to disappear. A posture of weakness in the face of Soviet hostility, backed by impressive military power, confirms certain "fascist" notions of Western decay and can only encourage Soviet aggressiveness. This is so despite the traditional reserve of the USSR in committing troops beyond its empire and the reserve affected by the specter of nuclear holocaust. At the very least, Western weakness will forestall the coalescence of factors which might ripen crisis and change in that regime. Todd would want to unite policies among Western countries on the reality of the inescapable hostility of the present Soviet regime. And within individual Western countries, Todd seeks a policy to unite the interests of the Right and the Left.

The Right has traditionally been more responsive to the military threat of the USSR. While their militarism must be tamed somewhat, their trade and investment practices regarding the Eastern bloc must be enlightened to pursue statesmanlike goals beyond immediate profit making. If the Left were to see the USSR as Todd sees it, a basically fascist regime, they too would be part of a policy which promoted the international liberation of workers, peasants, and intellectuals. Todd points to a policy which would present a united front in the face of the increasing disarray in the Soviet empire and in international Communism generally.

The structural defects of the Soviet economy have increased Soviet dependence on the West. Western technology is sought to increase the productivity of a now stagnant economy. In addition to technological dependency, the incongruity of centralized planning applied to the agricultural sector has made the Soviet Union sorely dependent on the West for basic foodstuffs. According to Todd, the very survival of the USSR is now in our hands.

The West must see the Soviet Union without illusions and erect a policy accordingly. Were Western resolve to check the Soviet Union militarily and externally, the internal forces of dissolution in that country would have greater play. The increasing economic depen-

dence of the Soviet Union gives the West increasing opportunity to influence and control their operation. The Soviet crisis, which in the long run cannot be averted, can be brought to a head by the West. Through our trade policies, we can, for example, promote the advance of the satellites, thereby heightening the economic and ideological tension which exists between these countries and the Soviet Union. The advance of the People's Democracies teaches the Eastern Europeans not only to despise their occupiers, but to disdain them. Through contact with the satellites, for military and other reasons, the citizens of the Soviet Union begin to envy them. Finally, they become conscious of the terrible repression and backwardness that they suffer under Communist rule.

In helping to foster crisis in the Soviet Union, the West would want to make a ruling class, habitually reactionary and now ruled by octogenarians, aware of the imperatives of change. All incentives should be provided that that change is along peaceful lines.

Todd's policy requires a prudent manipulation of economic forces. It is economic factors which have moved history and will shape the world's future. The USSR provides no exception. The policy of the West should not be exclusively oriented toward the military, nor toward peaceful coexistence, or even detente. Rather, it should be oriented around those economic forces which promote the transformation of the whole of the Soviet system.

In contrast to the Soviet Union, the leaders of the People's Democracies have undertaken a successful transition toward a consumer society. Their commitment to a Soviet communism is not at all the same as that in the USSR, where the "virtues" of a centralized economy have been the reigning dogma for well over half a century. The communist system in the satellites was largely externally imposed and unreflective of the desires and character of the peoples, who have been and continue to be more influenced by Western values. While cultural considerations may explain the relative ease of the transition toward a more liberal, decentralized, and rational economy, they do not explain what made it possible.

According to Todd, it was, paradoxically, the Red Army's occupation of the People's Democracies which guaranteed the stability necessary to undertake reform. Its repressive presence contains the unsettling effects of inflation and liberalization over the short run, and liberates forces which will lead to the development of a more highly evolved, Western-style, consumer society. A policy of reform, prudently but consciously pursued by the leaders in the more progressive satellite countries, gains legitimacy for a formerly exoge-

nous regime by cultivating a popular image for the leaders while satisfying the economic desires of the populace.

For a number of reasons, it would be all but impossible for the Soviet Union to pursue a similar development. The nationality problem which exists in the USSR does not apply to the small, homogeneous countries of Eastern Europe. Economic decentralization in the USSR would only embolden nationalistic sentiments and inspire secessionist movements. There is the question of will on the part of the Soviet leaders. But the circumspection of the Kremlin, it should be pointed out, goes beyond questions of habit and age in the face of the unpredictable response of the country's vast population to social change. There are, in addition, no foreign troops at the USSR's disposal to stem the unsettling effects of liberalization over the short or long run.

However, the problems under centralization can only worsen rendering reform all the more necessary. The Soviet regime, for example, faces an agricultural crisis brought on by the rapid rise of population subsequent to World War II and the failure of agriculture, collectively organized and centrally controlled, to keep pace. The agricultural crisis forbids the transfer of manpower to the industrial sector. At the same time, there is an overall diminishing rate of growth, despite an ever-increasing rate of investment. The Soviet Union is a huge country constantly adding to its capital stock without increasing its GNP. And from this the low level of worker productivity can be deduced as well as the high degree of bureaucratic inefficiency in the Soviet Union. Future economic growth, therefore, would have to be intensive rather than extensive. For reasons endemic to a centralized economy, we may legitimately doubt the possibility of sustained intensive growth in the present Soviet Union.

At bottom, Todd sees ideology as the source of the Soviet Union's economic dilemma. By transfiguring Marxism into an absolute, closed system, it sacrificed its scientific or empirical spirit. The result was Stalinism, whereby economic goals were determined by political requirements rather than by economic feasibility. Stalinism was a time of ideological idealism and fervor, of prodigious economic growth. But it inspired the people to build a system that could not substantiate their economic aspirations.

Whatever the ideology, centralization and bureaucratization are the logical consequence of a system that determines its goals a priori. In so doing, the goals become an end in themselves, and their execution becomes merely a matter of enforcement. Centralization thus becomes necessary as an instrument of enforcement. Eco-

nomic realities, being independent of political requirements per se, in themselves challenge an ideological system. To make concessions to economic realities is to acknowledge their validity over political demands, and thus refute the very principles upon which centralization is founded. But, at the same time, as the system evolves and the ideological dictates prove increasingly impractical, economic pressures become more and more persistent. These economic pressures are disregarded at the peril of the entire system and thus come to be officially denied while unofficially tolerated. The existence of a black market or parallel economy is a good example of this. From the radicalism of Stalin, to the reformism of Khrushchev,and the cynicism of Brezhnev, the regime's ideological convictions have steadily eroded as it became increasingly clear just how false they were. In the name of equality and social justice, a system of gross class exploitation and oppression has been created. Where originally ideology only incidentally enriched one class of people over another, it now becomes solely an instrument for maintaining the ruling class in power.

In contrast to the general and understandable trend in Soviet Studies to downplay the people's desire for change, Todd places much emphasis on the Russian people as a force for change in the future. It is their interests that are served by economic as opposed to political demands. They are the ones who suffer the consequences of bureaucratic ineptitude and mismanagement. For Todd, economics is, by definition, of individual concern—it satisfies individual, material needs. Economic pressure for change is thus manifested in the people's demand for political freedom, i.e., the freedom to satisfy their own particular needs in their own way. Drawing extensively from sociological data, Todd is able to convincingly deduce the existence of significant social unrest in the USSR related to economic dissatisfaction.

In characterizing even the Russian citizen as bourgeois, Todd is exemplifying his thesis of the universality of the Western system. Basically, it is the social-democratic, mixed economy of the West which is the most revolutionary, historically most advanced, and most, so to speak, in accord with human nature. In Todd's view, forces are tending, not only in Eastern Europe but in the Third World, toward the evolution of such a system. A peace, secured by nuclear weapons and a balance of terror, can only accelerate economic development and the action of these forces. These same forces will either spur a similar evolution in the USSR, or, in effect, sweep that society into the ashcan of history.

The Final Fall, for all its grave predictions regarding the USSR, is

replete with at least the optimism if not many of the assumptions of early liberal thinkers. In contemplating the final fall of the Soviet Union, it may be unnecessary to point out, we are contemplating the fall of what was one of the world's largest and most threatening tyrannies. There remains only the vision of Amalrik and perhaps the warnings of Solzhenitsyn to keep our optimism from being complete.

* * *

Todd opens his book with a criticism of leftist and liberal students of Soviet society. Whatever their final evaluation of the Soviet Union, both see the Soviet regime as essentially stable. This is a persistent and predominant misconception about the USSR which Todd immediately sets out to attack. Its root may lie in Marxist theory, which sees the worker's state as having eliminated class struggles and class distinctions. Perhaps it is due to Marx's great influence that the class nature of Soviet society is so underestimated. At any rate, in underestimating the class nature of Soviet society, Western thinkers generally overestimate its stability.

Far from classes having been eliminated in the USSR, unlimited power has been concentrated in the hands of a very narrow oligarchy. The "dictatorship of the proletariat" has proven to be a dictatorship but of "a new class" of self-serving individuals. Moreover, as the economy stagnates, access to privilege is cut off. We are confronted with a class society of extreme rigidity. The social pressures which work against such a system require commensurate repressive forces.

Todd does not mean to imply that Marx is a useless guide in our study of Soviet society. On the contrary, despite Todd's dispute with the Marxists, he is not being disingenuous when he acknowledges the stature of Marx. In fact, it is when the class nature of Soviet society is fully recognized that Marxian categories can be most usefully applied to a study of the Soviet Union.

In effect, Todd seizes the weapons of his more orthodox Marxist opponents and turns them against his adversaries. The gap in income in the USSR between the privileged few and the masses, the lack of elementary political freedom and the right to organize, a subsistence life that denies meaningful self expression, make the Soviet worker a truly "exploited" and "alienated" individual. The pages of *Capital* that describe and castigate monopoly capitalism are also apt (though the criticism might not be severe enough) in describing what attains in the USSR, the absolute monopoly of the state. Far from being progressive, the atavistic elements of the USSR are becoming more and more prominent. Marx's analysis of precapitalist societies, particularly Asian bureaucracies, prove particularly

useful in understanding the contemporary Soviet Union. Todd claims that Marx is *the* theoretician of social crisis. It is Marx who, very often, stands behind Todd's analysis of the present crisis in the Soviet Union.

In Todd's general approach to Marx, he indicates that Marx's writings are not sacred texts. Some of what Marx said was right, some wrong, and much would need to be vindicated. Todd's assessment is perhaps just. We have a right to remain open but skeptical in light of events that have transpired since Marx's time and have apparently contradicted his thesis. Where Marx is useful, Todd will use him; where he is not, Todd will reject him. In all else, Marx will be tested. Todd's pragmatic attitude, however tenable, already places him outside the ranks of the more orthodox Marxists.

Todd's distance from orthodox Marxism is at its most extreme in his evaluation of Western capitalism. It is not Communism but a modified form of capitalism which has proven itself to be the most advanced and perhaps the most humane system. Marx may be exonerated for not accepting this, but the Marxists cannot. Attitudes and developments subsequent to Marx, largely inspired by Lord Keynes, have demonstrated the adaptability of capitalism. Its tremendous productive powers cannot be gainsaid. Wealth has not concentrated; the worker has not been pauperized. The bourgeoisie has accepted the idea that their interest is inextricable with the material betterment of the worker.

Contrary to Marx, egoism may be an ineradicable part of the human condition. The tremendous productivity of capitalism is grounded on this recognition. But egoism is susceptible of refinement. Refined egoism can be seen in the attitude of the post-Keynesian bourgeois, in what was formerly called "self interest rightly understood," which may be only the simulacrum of better motives but which has a similar effect. In satisfying basic desires, capitalism at least opens the human spirit to these better motives and even gives the wherewithal to satisfy generous instincts. Todd replies to certain Marxist critiques in pointing out that a consumer-oriented society extends the possibilities of human choice and self-expression. Furthermore, this freedom in the marketplace is not unconnected to freedom in the political sphere. If we want cruder manifestations of egoism, we may turn to the USSR and the regime that has supposedly eradicated its source. The pragmatic Todd would maintain that the superiority of capitalism has proved itself according to the only standard accepted by all Marxists—in practice over theory.

Todd's position manifests a great affinity with certain East Eu-

ropean thinkers for whom he reserves the highest respect. Todd sees the University of Budapest as the future "school" of Europe. It is scions of this university who abandoned the efforts at an inner revitalization of Marxism, which characterized the "Marxist Renaissance" of the late 60s and early 70s. Marx retains vitality as an opponent of all ideology. In broadest terms, Marxism itself is to be de-ideologized and made serviceable to a pragmatic approach of the studies of societies. Such a de-ideologized Marxism may be turned against the nominally Marxist Soviet regime, just as it may lend support to certain features of capitalist societies.

Todd shares with Marx his historicism and his materialist view of man. He accepts the view that economics is dispositive of politics. In the long-run, history moves by certain more or less inexorable economic forces or "determinisms." It is only within the parameters of these "determinisms" that free choice can effectually operate. The broader implications of Todd's position can be more fully appreciated when these features of his thought are fleshed out.

Todd's view of man may not be too different from his characterization of the average Russian. He wants security, regardless of who rules him, and essential freedoms in order to consume and seek basically private satisfactions. Questions of politics—of justice—are subsidiary, ideological matters. In Africa, for example, Todd advises the West to treat these Ideological matters lightly, at least for the time being, and to concentrate on what is real—the economic. The latter are the forces that will change the world, in Africa as well as the USSR, and which facilitate political liberty—an opinion shared by Orlov in his prescription for the USSR.

Todd has a more prosaic view of man's future than Marx. History is not punctuated by a universal revolution which transforms the egotistical character of man. The future holds no promise for a "resolution of all human contradictions." Rather, history is moving toward the refinement of a system of already proven efficiency and productivity which takes that egoism for granted, a synthesis of capitalistic and socialistic elements.

The contemporary generation of thinkers can be characterized by a certain realism. They are, expressly, no longer concerned about building an ideal society. As Shafarevich implies, perhaps totalitarian premises are latent in such idealism. At any rate, the greatest crimes of the modern era have been perpetrated on behalf of such impulses, however pure their origins. In reaction to idealism, Todd and other contemporary thinkers would seemingly orient their politics around, not what is rare or unique in men, but what is common and basic.

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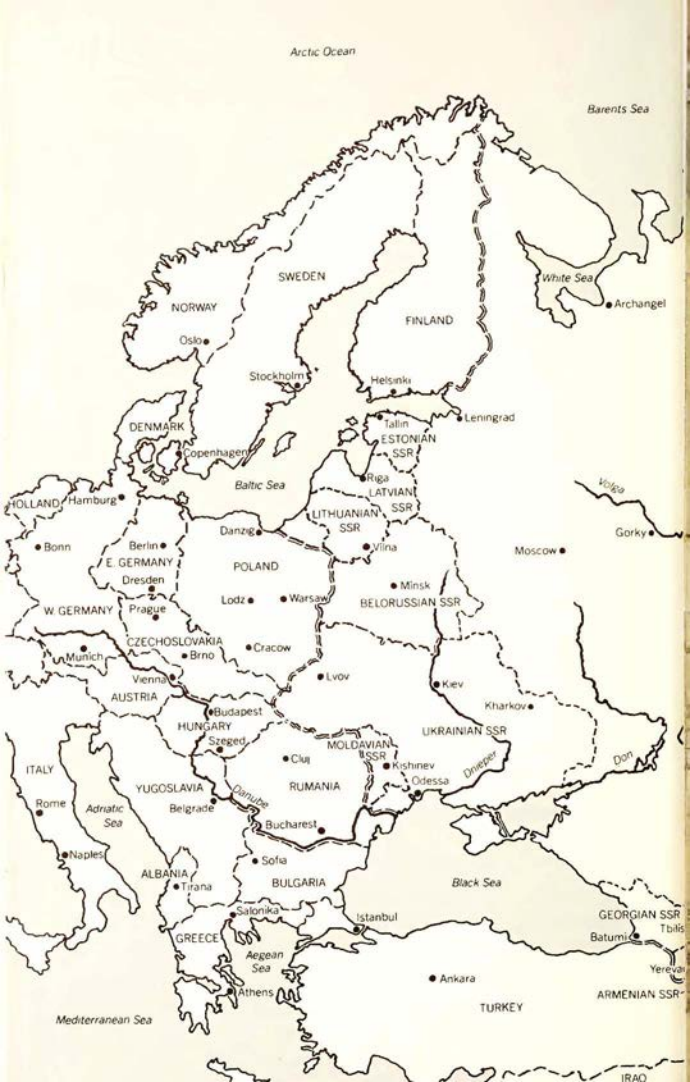
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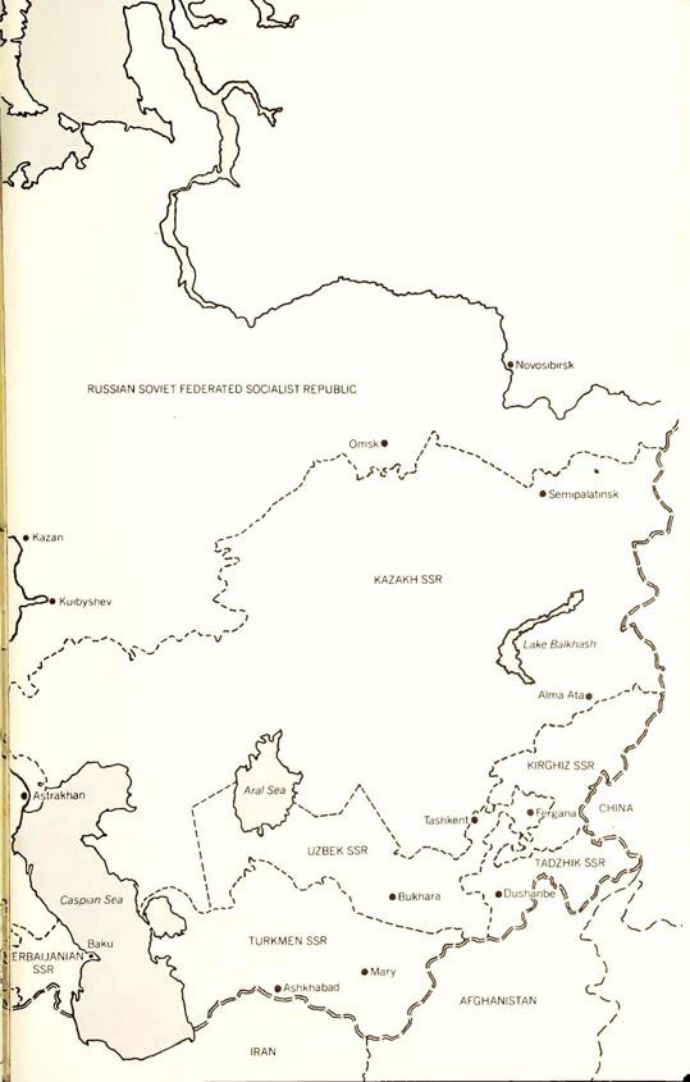
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INTRODUCTION

Methodological Problems in the Study of Closed Societies

Westerners have been accustomed to think of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a given, something definite, a fixed point in the flux of contemporary political and social systems. Among orthodox Communists, the USSR represents the society of tomorrow, the end of history, the final resolution of all human conflicts. Among liberals, the USSR is seen as an odious but stable system. In suppressing liberty, it also suppresses social strife.

Both conceptions are equally false. Internal pressures are pushing the Soviet system to the breaking point. In ten, twenty, or thirty years, an astonished world will be witness to the dissolution or the collapse of this the first of the Communist systems.

The Soviet regime is odious but it is not stable.

Significant things are now taking place in the USSR. Information, reports, and rumors coming from Moscow have increased markedly since the end of 1975. We are now aware of the magnitude of their grain importations; of political trials, riots, strikes, conspiracies, and mutinies; of the implications of ideological attacks on the West, and the discord in what remains of the Third International.

The history of the USSR is entering a decisive phase.

Sociological Models

Marx continues to be *the* theoretician of social crises. Therefore, our point of departure should be his strengths and weaknesses. Let us begin with his analysis of the contradictions of capitalism.

Marx perceived and described the economic breakdown of the nineteenth century and foresaw the proliferation of the working class. He attempted to demonstrate the inevitable stagnation of its wages, which, in turn, necessarily leads to crises of overproduction. If wages are too low, workers consume too little, and industry produces too much. The weak point of Marx's reasoning is revealed in his thesis concerning the total stagnation of worker's wages, formerly called "absolute pauperization." In Marx's time, the phenomenon was often quite real and even empirically verifiable. But it is impossible to verify its absolute inevitability by deductive reasoning. Were an increase in worker's wages to occur, two consequences would follow. It would raise the level of life of the working class and integrate it into the nation as a whole. And it would do away with crises of overproduction, since the proletariat would then produce for itself, at least partially.

Marx thought he had uncovered an absolute economic law when he had in fact only formulated a hypothesis concerning the activities and behavior of the exploiting ruling class. He was determined that the European bourgeoisie would continue maximum economic exploitation of the proletariat and maintain wages on a pure subsistence level in the face of everything, even their own interest and consequent survival. The result of this bourgeois attitude is a blend of serious economic crises and worker discontentment which is now known to lead more readily to fascism than to socialism. In sum, it could be said that Marx's hypothesis, which sees the shortsightedness of the bourgeoisie as systemic, had a certain validity until the crisis of overproduction in 1929. Until then, real wages had risen, a fact already in contradiction to Marx's hypothesis-prediction. But their increase did not keep pace with productive capacities, despite the efforts of perceptive executives like Henry Ford, who, in the twenties, thought that his workers should be able to buy the automobiles made by his company.

Bourgeois stupidity suddenly came to and ended with Keynes, whose *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* explained crises of overproduction, the future insufficiency of mass

demand, and the folly of former liberal theories which saw economic equilibrium as incumbent on a decrease in wages when the rate of investment declines. The principal consequences of the Keynesian theory were state investments in periods of recession and, less obvious but more important (because of its structural effects), acceptance on the part of the Western bourgeoisie of the idea that their interest is inextricable from the material betterment of the working class. A continual rise in worker's wages in periods of growth ensures a regular rise in consumptive capacities to absorb the volume of production. It was a simple change, but it first had to be conceived, or rather the Victorian prejudice which associated worker enrichment with a nonproductive proletariat had to be overcome. The source of Western growth since the war is found in the awakening of this consciousness. Keynes formulated his theory in 1936; but, it was the experience of Nazism and the Second World War which emphatically cleared the way for its acceptance.

A fundamental distinction is implied in this analysis. This is the distinction between economic and social determinisms on the one hand, and the mentality, intelligence, and attitude of the ruling classes on the other.

Let us apply this distinction to Soviet society. The economy of the USSR is entering a period of stagnation of crisis proportions. The leaders of the Soviet Union are facing certain social and national tensions which threaten the whole Communist system with disruption and dissolution. These "deterministic" elements are analyzed in the first part of this essay. In this section, we need not consider the fact that the Soviet ruling class is imbued by an intellectual impoverishment like that of the bourgeois economists in the years 1880–1930. Later, it will be necessary to comprehend the "delicacy" of its situation, to see how it might try to extricate itself. This will require going beyond the study of economic determinisms to that of mentality, of choice, and of everything which is indeterminate in human society. The second part of this essay addresses itself to the mentality of the principal actors in the crisis of Russian Communism: ruling classes, exploited classes, and certainly Western countries, without forgetting the peoples and rulers of the satellite countries and the federated republics.

My treatment of Marxism will probably surprise the reader, whether he be Marxian, a student of Marx, a Marxist sympathizer, a neo-Marxist, or simply Marxist. I therefore would very much like to

make clear the respect my position has for this venerable doctrine. I do not consider Marxism either "true" or "false." Rather, the works of Marx and Engels contain a set of propositions, some of which are accurate, others false, and still others unverified. Marxist hypotheses can be applied to certain situations, and are often even surprisingly apt. But they must be rejected in an almost equal number of cases. Nevertheless, the majority of the propositions formulated by Marx and Engels have a common characteristic: they are demonstrable. When a passage from Marx presents itself, an example can generally be furnished which confirms or confutes the proposition it puts forth.

An English logical positivist would say that the majority of Marx's propositions fulfill the requirements of the "principle of verifiability." In other words, they are meaningful; they are either true or false but rarely "nonsensical." On the other hand, a large part of "Marxist" scholarship written after Marx would fail the test of this principle. It would seriously undermine the status of those "philosophic" works of the Editions Sociale and the Editions Maspero elaborated by guerrilla strategists.

History, Sociology, Information

Very little is known about Communist countries. Statistics furnished by the governments and agencies in Eastern European countries are as unverifiable as the testimony of refugees or dissidents. Only certain massive facts can be known for sure: the Soviet's purchase of American wheat, the periodic riots of Polish workers, the USSR's launching of a satellite toward the moon or Venus. No one in the East or West contests these facts. Nevertheless, we must admit that our information is, on the whole, incomplete, fragmentary, and uncertain. Starting from these rather crude facts, can the future of the Soviet system be studied, analyzed, and predicted? Yes, provided it is understood that the study of the Communist world is the province of the historian, and follows specific methodological rules.

Historians do not let the unavoidable inadequacies of their evidence stop them. They frequently theorize about feudal society, the Old Regime, or ancient times by constructing models to fill the gaps in their sources. The first requirement of a historic model is to

integrate all known facts. On this basis, certain other facts, formerly misunderstood or unknown, can then be logically deduced.

For example, eyewitnesses were not needed to know that a drastic decline in population would quite radically alter the relations between the lord and peasant in preindustrial Europe. A decline in population implies a decline in rents, and a rise in wages. This brings about a strain in the economic relations between ruling and ruled which in turn causes more general social dislocations. This very thing occurred in Europe after the great plague in 1348. In his book, *Paysans de Languedoc (The Peasants of Languedoc),* Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie gives empirical evidence for Ricardo's economic theories and discourses on its social implications.[1] Yet, Ricardo's model is equally relevant to other places and historic periods, when only fragmentary evidence is known.

Although models which stay within the bounds of economics have a maximum of coherence and rigor, we are not limited to them. There is again no need for eyewitnesses to know that a decline in profits or rents demoralizes the ruling classes. Knowledge of a single, rather elementary fact—a decline in population causes an increase in wages and a lowering of rent from land—allows for speculation on a rather broad range of hypotheses, which clearly go beyond the framework of strict economic analysis.

Marx himself, who addressed the whole sweep of history, based his theory on certain pregnant facts, using a quasi-rigorous, reductionist model that has been traditionally called historical materialism. His correspondence with Engels indicates that one of their principal problems was the lack of reliable evidence about their own society as well as information regarding societies in the past and in the future. His predictions, which require vindication, must be seen as an incentive to research as well as to circumspection.[2]

And yet, it must be granted that information on the Soviet system is still less certain than evidence on the feudal system. The USSR arouses our passions more than seventeenth-century Europe. Therefore, I am putting forth a hard and fast rule with which to analyze information. As a fundamental methodological point: *The most suspect reports—namely, individual testimony coming from Communist countries—are to be considered as true if they can be integrated into a socially coherent model.*

Communist societies intentionally conceal themselves. We must never give them the benefit of the doubt. Beginning from certain

logical assumptions and a multiplicity of individual testimony, a socially and historically coherent model must be constructed. A coherent model constructed from *nonverifiable* "starting points" is preferable to the incoherent model constructed from the *equally unverifiable "givens"* that the Communists offer us.

Analyses which merely rely on documents and testimony are inadequate. Considering the complex of love and hate which surrounds the Communist system, bias is inevitable. All information originating from the USSR is automatically suspect. Some might be rejected as useless because they are pro-Communist, others as equally improbable because they are anti-Communist. A comparison of an economics text published in Moscow, which describes a socialist economy functioning at full, regulated capacity, with Sakharov's book, which paints an incredible portrait of the Soviet world's utter lack of development, is an exasperating undertaking.[3] The mind boggles at so many contradictions. One is tempted to throw it all in the garbage, convinced that both apologists and dissidents belong to the same fanatical society.

Recourse must be had to integrative analysis. No matter what our source is, it is necessary to assess all information in terms of a rational sociological model, to select elements that allow for the construction of an internally consistent whole from a very meager stock of documented facts. When this kind of coherent analysis is mentioned as an historical method, one naturally thinks of the coherent analysis of a single source of evidence. But the historian's use of economic and sociological models brings about a new perspective, a new approach, which turns historical investigation into a more complex operation. The validity of a piece of information is no longer judged on the level of a written text (i.e., in terms of consistency and the author's bias). Rather, validity lies in establishing the compatibility of certain economic and sociological elements with an a priori model. It follows that this method entails the use of economic and sociological postulates.

The fundamental incoherency of the Communists' depiction of the Soviet social system is characterized by the following contradiction. If the USSR had a stable social system as they claim, they would not fear to open their borders and allow freedom of travel, nearly sixty years after their revolution. It can and must be inferred from the closing of their borders that their rulers still consider Soviet society

fragile. And if their society is fragile, then there must exist fundamental internal tensions.

How Statistics Mislead

Pro-Soviet reports are generally filled with statistics. Surely because of centralized planning, but also because of the naturally scientific penchant of Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the Soviets are great quantifiers.

It is disconcerting to think how easily numbers can be falsified. A stroke of the pen can, on paper, cause the production of wheat, apples, iron, automobiles, or toothpaste to double. Statistics represent a mass of elementary facts which are, as such, almost impossible to verify. Paradoxically, it is easier to know with certainty the existence or nonexistence of concentration camps (a single, massive, nonquantifiable fact) than the actual production of steel, automobiles, vinegar, or shoes in the USSR. Questions concerning "work camps" become obviously more problematical if we try to discover the number of such camps and the prisoners therein.

The problem of statistics must be emphasized. *Statistics generally have a reassuring effect,* even despite their obvious inadequacy when coming from Communist countries. It is as surprising as it is undeniable that the historians and students of the Old Regime in France are as vulnerable in this regard as the economists and geographers who analyze the USSR and and the so-called People's Democracies. Statistical data cannot fail to impress, even if the numbers are falsified, or when historians are unintentionally in error. In our unstable world, there is comfort in numbers and equations. But one who traffics in numbers gives us opinions and not facts.

The attitude of certain economists is very curious but not uncommon. After briefly describing the orientation of their study, they adopt the statistics furnished by the same Soviet authorities who forbid tourists, professors, and Western journalists access to three-quarters of their territory.[4]

Our scholars must accept the psychological and political insecurity which comes from recognizing the unreliability of Soviet statistics. They must also no longer fear the denial of their Moscow visas, which seems so essential to their work.

Then how can information be obtained?

The data which describe the economic relations between Communists and Western countries—exportations, importations, etc.—are verifiable. They therefore occupy a privileged position in any analysis of Communist economic systems. Foreign trade can give extremely precise indications of the internal functioning of an economy.

The recent development of trade between East and West has suddenly advanced our knowledge of Communist economic systems. The Soviet crisis has attained such proportions that official Soviet statisticians are losing a large part of their traditional reserve, as the lessening in the official rate of Soviet economic growth would indicate. Generally, the growth in the mass of information coming from the USSR is the first symptom of the crisis of Russian Communism. A statistical breakdown of the enormous volume of information coming from the USSR can surely be expected.

Soviet statistics are shabby and false but not totally useless. There are gaps and statistical blunders in the increasing volume of official data in the Soviet Union. A characteristic example can be found in demography. The era of the purges, which could be expressed in demographic terms as an increase in the death rate and a decrease in the birth rate, clearly "appears" in the conspicuous absence of statistics. Collectivization, the period of the civil war, deportation, and famines have also led to the complete disappearance of birth and death statistics. Between 1924 and 1930, the rate of birth was approximately 38–40 per thousand. From 1931 to 1935, official data did not furnish this simple demographic index.[5] Statistical gaps indicate the abuses of Stalinism, especially when they succeed a period marked by a relatively large volume of data. In China, the Great Leap Forward was quickly followed by a great leap backward with regard to statistical studies—something which alerts us to the scope of the "errors" of the Chinese Communist Party.

Demographic data are more difficult to tamper with than economic indices because the concepts from which they are derived are more simple. An individual, his age, his sex, his length of life are relatively easy to determine. The longevity of a shoe, its price, its quality, even its existence are less accessible and more difficult to verify. Therefore, demography, in fact the foremost and certainly the only true human *science,* is a discipline whose variables apply to inelastic relations and which always ends up betraying Communist systems. Age pyramids for decades have fixed for everyone to see the errors of Stalinism, Maoism, or any other totalitarian alternative which

declares war upon a human community as if it were dealing with a blank sheet, or involved in a game of gratuitous slaughter. Rather belatedly, it is apparent that 30 to 60 million inhabitants in the USSR are missing. In 1975, it was clear that about 150 million were missing in China.[6] Given population, the proportions are nearly the same.

After 1930 in the USSR, the discipline of demography was assaulted by Stalin. Professors, students, and data itself were purged. Its present renaissance is still fragile and far from complete. Soviet demographers, who are superciliously judged by their Hungarian and Polish colleagues, are not very bright. They allow useful information to filter through. It does not appear to be known in the USSR, either in the Kremlin or in the University of Lomonossov, that the birth rate could be used to measure the progress of certain attitudes and social aspirations. The backwardness of the human sciences in the Soviet Union infects official statisticians who are often incapable of evaluating the sociological, as opposed to the political or ideological, implications of certain numbers.

Therefore, certain noncontroversial numbers can be diverted from their propaganda objective. Birth and death statistics often allow for interpretations which go beyond the framework of strict demographic analysis. Historical demography has caused astonishing progress to be made in the understanding of peasant attitudes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

How the Legal System Misleads

The law is a second veil whitewashing Soviet reality. According to its constitution and legislative documents, the USSR is the most perfect democracy. Unfortunately, civil rights exist only on paper. They are more cosmetic than genuine. Raymond Aron has devoted an entire chapter of *Démocratie et totalitarisme (Democracy and Totalitarianism)*[7] (Paris, 1965) to the fictional character of the Soviet constitution, which theoretically guarantees all fundamental rights: freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly. In 1937, the era of the great Stalinist trials, which directly followed upon the adoption of a perfectly democratic constitution, Soviet justice was a chimera. 1976 was no different. It is enough to witness Soviet youths forcefully blocked from the Russian Orthodox Easter services to understand that freedom of religion is a cruel joke.

However, the vicissitudes of the real, *unofficial,* and *implicit* law are difficult to follow. This law, known by both authorities and the general populace, is methodically applied by police and tribunals, but never appears in any text, unless perhaps in the intramural memos of the KGB and the Minister of the Interior. The USSR is in large measure a country with an oral tradition. This is because the press, completely controlled by the state, describes a fantasy world. Alain Besançon would call it the realm of the surreal. In a sense, Russian Communism veils a primitive society, where real information (e.g., censored events and unofficial regulations) circulates by word of mouth outside of newspapers and books. A very strict unwritten law exists in Russia. But the oral tradition, so flexible and fluid compared to codified law, poses a peculiar problem for the analyst. Anthropologists and historians of the Middle Ages are very aware of this problem, which must also concern students of the Soviet Union. The unwritten Soviet law varies, but its variations do not appear in any code. The techniques and goals of repression have changed under Stalin, Khrushchev, and finally Brezhnev, without corresponding changes in the official legal system.

The study of changes in the unofficial Communist law is as difficult as the analysis of the evolution of law in times past. Thus, everyone knows that censorship is less severe in Poland, and above all in Hungary, than in the USSR. However, the Soviet constitution is no less absolute than the Hungarian constitution concerning the definition and guaranty of "formal" liberties. In the case of exactly similar legal systems, two different situations result in fact, stemming from two different sets of unwritten laws. Once again, it is easy to show that censorship exists in all Communist countries, Hungary and Poland included, and that there exists in each a flagrant contradiction between the letter of the law and the law in practice. It is much less easy to assess the extent of contradiction according to country, or the degree of repression hidden behind the impeccable legislative documents of Communist countries.

To try to crack the Communist system of *noninformation* involves intelligence work. Some will think that the qualities of a professor disqualify him from the domain of the many Western secret services. Yet, SIS, the Intelligence Service, habitually recruits en masse from historians coming out of British universities. Thus, at the end of the last world war, Hugh Trevor-Roper, distinguished historian of the

preindustrial era, became an extremely subtle analyst of the quite curious circumstances that surrounded the death of Hitler.

In the wake of interdisciplinary movements, a "monstrous" thought occurs to me. We will not come to a "correct" understanding of the Soviet system except by more extensive collaboration between professors—historians, economists, and sociologists—and intelligence services.

The SDECE, the SIS, the CIA, the BND—the intelligence bureaus of France, Britain, America, and Germany respectively—in addition to strictly military intelligence, collect a mass of information on the state of Soviet society. But a mania for secrecy and a lack of organization prevent certain specialized services from drawing out the sociological consequences of their discoveries. Similarly, models built by certain academics, which describe the Soviet's economy, society, and political system, lack rigor because they are not based on the actual, necessary "givens." Light can be shed on these things from the illicit association of these two branches of "knowledge." But while the liberal world protests this association as inherently problematical, the Soviet sphere has virtually no such qualms.

The SDECE, for example, publishes too much intelligence on strictly military variables, the number of tanks, planes, and missiles in the Warsaw Pact. Research in the economic and sociological area —the real standard of living, suicides, alcoholism, homicide, delinquency, the social and geographic mobility of ordinary individuals— would all be quite useful. It is also conceivable that programs could be established having as a goal the synthesis and quantification of things observed by various Western visitors in the USSR concerning the state of mind of certain citizens, the intensity of their satisfactions and dissatisfactions. It would be more difficult but more interesting, if possible, to objectify and quantify the observations of scores of Westerners, the students, engineers, and technicians who each year have the opportunity to live in a city of the Russian provinces. Conclusive data, such as what percentage of citizens in the city of Ivanov—where there were documented riots in 1970—is dissident at such and such a time, may be impossible. But it is possible to observe with a certain precision the *changes* in objective or subjective variables over time.

An historical illustration can be given. Let us research the number of persons who know how to read and write in a peasant community

in the seventeenth century. The Old Regime obviously has not left us precise statistics in this matter. Yet, we do have signatures on a number of baptismal, marriage, and death certificates, and also crosses and vouchers that declare an inability to sign one's name. The exact ratio between the capacity to sign one's name, on the one hand, and the capacity to read and write on the other cannot be determined. Yet it is reasonable to assume a close if not an exact correspondence between these variables. It cannot be proven what percentage knew how to read, but it is a fairly reasonable assumption that if the proportion of those knowing how to sign increases, that of knowing how to read and write also increases. An accurate proportion can never be attained at a given time, yet changes over time in the level of literacy can be observed within certain limits.

A similar technique might be employed in studies of the Soviet Union.

The nature and the level of police activities are fundamental variables for understanding any social system whatsoever. In Western Europe, a very strict correlation between the number of police corps and sociopolitical tensions can be drawn. The French cadres are twice the number of Britain's. The police are numerous in Italy, but not in Scandanavian countries.

In addition to an evaluation of the military strength of the Warsaw Pact, the SDECE could furnish us with an estimate of the strength of the KGB, the ratio of police to population in the USSR. It is perfectly feasible to record, gather, and quantify the experiences of individual Western visitors to Russia, the Federated Republics, and the Eastern European satellites. We could find *the average number of interrogations per visitor over a given period of time.* This number, in itself, would not have great significance (like the percentage of those knowing how to sign their names in the Old Regime, for example). Nevertheless, *variations over time* would be a fascinating and rich source of information. Indices could be broken down to calculate certain *ratios* according to the kind of visitor (e.g., student, engineer, tourist) and according to region (e.g., capitals, large provincial cities, peripheral republics). A chart indicating the intensity of police control in the USSR according to region would help us a great deal to understand the exact nature of the relations of Russia and her internal provinces (the Federated Republics) as well as her external appendages (the People's Democracies).

Even more specific questions could be raised. For example, what

are the motives and consequences of conducting these interrogations? The efficiency of the police is also an important variable. For example, how many times has each Western visitor succeeded in *violating* a Soviet rule or law without being spotted by the KGB? *The ratio of the number of infractions to the number of interrogations* would give a very precise idea of variations in police effectiveness, of fluctuations in the activity of the KGB. It is possible to use the stock of police-related stories, sometimes tragic but often comical, brought back from the USSR by Western travelers and index them to measure certain aspects of police control over time and place. These facts are painfully lacking. The effectiveness of the KGB within the USSR is perhaps at a low point. But impressions, founded on a limited number of stories, could be made more reliable.

The methods originally employed to count the number of tanks, soldiers, and planes were of this type, i.e., information gathered by individuals and later synthesized. Nowadays, the principal role is played by MIDAS satellite photography; but the older techniques could be successfully applied to certain sociological variables, as essential to our comprehension of the functioning of the Soviet system as its degree of militarization.

Western secret services do not function in a manner suggested by such American films as *Three Days of the Condor.* They are not staffed by handsome, young, and intelligent Robert Redfords who research a particular piece of information, a particular key to unlock a particular mystery, or a particular individual. When not ensconced in their periodic crises, when they are not called to account by themselves or others, the task of Western intelligence services is to gather information as much as they analyze it.

So, for the time being, we must do without information of a sociological nature coming out of large intelligence bureaus, but this is certainly no reason to be satisfied with it.

Heterogeneity

To penetrate the borders of the USSR is not to penetrate the phenomenon of the USSR. Facts reported by Western travelers in the USSR are often quite inadequate, even if the observer's impartiality can be ascertained. Soviet territory is cloistered, and rigorously compartmentalized.[8] Tourists visiting Moscow and Leningrad

can cross from west to east in European Russia, and from north to south, but not without leaving the same road. In the same way, they have the right to travel in certain peripheral republics.

The organization of Soviet territory is not homogeneous. For example, Moscow and Leningrad are privileged cities. Each Soviet urban area belongs to a supply classification. The two capitals are obviously in the most privileged category, with shop windows for the tourists and stores for the apparatchiki. The reality of the Soviet system, however, is elsewhere. It is in the Russian countryside, off limits to tourists and journalists, and in the great industrial cities of the provinces, also off limits.

The "Soviet System" analyzed in my book includes the USSR, properly speaking, and all its *satellites.* The problems posed by the various nations integrated into the Russian machine, whether they are the People's Democracies or the non-Russian Republics of the Federation, are crucial for understanding the crisis of the system. One of the essential aspects of Russian Communism, which was a legacy of Tsarism expanded under Stalin, is its political and military domination of numerous remote peoples. Other Communists—Chinese, Vietnamese, Cubans—have hardly any "nationality" problem. Yugoslavia is also a federation, but it brings together peoples whose numerical and political influences are very nearly balanced.

The existence of this rim of internal and external satellites is one of the principal factors of disintegration in the Soviet Union.

Unlike the USSR, the People's Democracies are not cordoned off by internal partitions. In Hungary, where tourists have complete freedom of travel, I have thumbed my way throughout the country. I have also sauntered about the faubourgs of Budapest between 1:00 and 5:00 A.M., fairly drunk and boisterous, with a group of young Hungarians. On no occasion was I ever interrogated by the police.

The distinction between the center (Russia in the strict sense) and the periphery (Soviet Republics and Eastern European satellites) is fundamental for the analysis of the Soviet system. It has been a classic error to understand the People's Democracies, Federated Republics, and Russia by the same model. Hungary is not a miniature Russia.

Territorial and social heterogeneity in a country which professes a universal ideology further strains relations between partisans and opponents of the regime.

Along with problems of geographic heterogeneity are significant social dislocations, the characteristics of a centralized country where contradictory decisions have followed one upon the other for sixty years. The Communist press assaults us with proclamations about the "modernity of the Soviet system." Sputnik, the development of the sciences, the high level of literacy, the number of tanks and intercontinental missiles point to the Soviet Union as the second most highly developed country in the world.

But another evaluation is possible. Attention need only be paid to the level of life there, the absence of automobiles and decent lodging, the abysmal state of culture, and the absence of elementary political and social liberties.

It is easy to rank the development of Western countries. In capitalist systems, there is a fairly close positive correlation between the per capita national product on the one hand, and military strength, literacy, and the degree of liberty and cultural dynamism on the other. All such aspects advance in parallel ways. But it is not the same with the Soviet Union.

An understanding of the USSR cannot be achieved by researching public opinion. The capitals, the provincial cities, the rural regions, the Federated Republics; likewise, the workers, peasants, intellectuals; those in the army, intelligence system, and scientific research; and even the degree of political liberty in any region whatsoever are not typical of *any* single Soviet reality. The general system cannot be distilled from any local social and geographic sections. A general study alone, which takes strict account of local differences and social heterogeneity, allows for an accurate comprehension of the *system.* To merely describe the USSR as a "land of contrasts" is a little misleading, since the contrasts are manufactured by the system of government.

What Travel Offices Tell Us

Authorized automobile itineraries for Western tourists in the USSR essentially cover the Moscow-Leningrad region and, in the Federated Republics, the Ukraine, Belorussia, Georgia, Armenia, Estonia, and Moldavia. Of the 33 cities of more than 500,000 inhabitants, 13 are open to Western automobiles.

The greater part of the territory of the Federated Republics of

Russia is off limits to them. This even includes certain Federated Republics like Latvia and Lithuania, and the Moslem republics of Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

When someone wants to go to the USSR by automobile he must furnish Soviet officials with a detailed itinerary indicating time of arrival and the duration of his stay in the various cities he will travel through. The roads indicated on the map are the only ones authorized. Except in certain northern republics—Moldavia, Caucasia, southern Ukraine—a secondary network of roads is not open to Westerners. The roads in Russia, properly speaking, do not pass through the majority of cities but rather skirt them. Contrary to what might be thought, it is not a question of bottling up the downtown areas. In fact, a driver of a "Deux-Chevaux," a Peugeot, a Land Rover, a Fiat, or a Volvo, traveling with friends, a traveling party, or his small family can travel 2000 km. of Russia without even seeing a kolkhoz, that is to say, a village.

The automobile "itinerary" will receive approval if one is not on the lists of the KGB. An ordinary tourist who wants to drive in the USSR can obtain a visa in several months, assuming there are no problems.

Visits to zones closed to automobile traffic (trans-Siberian travel and certain circuits in Central Asia) are granted only to VIPs. It is important to note that there is no *rule* forbidding access to these zones. Requests for visas there simply receive no response.

Let it be added that journalists posted in Moscow are confined to a radius of 60 km. from the center of the city. This is a small step forward in as much as the radius was 40 km. before the Helsinki Conference. This limit has not prevented some Western journalists from successfully performing their information-gathering tasks, as Hedrik Smith's book *(The Russians)* on everyday Russian life attests.

As with everyone and especially every aspiring student of Communism, problems with documenting evidence must be faced. I have followed several simple methodological rules.

Starting with a rudimentary mode of analysis, our study can result in some definite conclusions about the Soviet system. The unreliability of the information is itself decisive in categorizing the Soviet system as totalitarian. Given this unreliability, it is necessary to:

1. Give more authority to individual testimony than to official information and statistics.

2. Avoid judging an account on the basis of plausibility and the veracity of a witness. Instead, give greater authority to the criterion of sociological coherence.
3. Identify witnesses geographically and socially in order to avoid attributing to the whole of the Soviet system what applies to a social or geographical segment. It must constantly be recalled that the USSR is extraordinarily heterogeneous.
4. Give greater authority to oblique analysis when forced to use official statistics. That is to say, be sure that Soviet propagandists and statisticians did not intend and prepare evidence to yield certain conclusions.
5. As far as possible, use numbers that document things involved in foreign relations, such as trade statistics.

Part I

SOCIAL DETERMINISMS

Chapter 1

THE ENDURING CHARACTER OF STALINISM

The following postulate is proposed: in a "normal" society, the purpose of a repressive system is to repress. In fact, this is more of a definition than a postulate. It can be said that a society is "normal" if the purpose of its repressive system is to repress. It is readily apparent that "normalcy" does not apply to Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia. Their repressive systems were not utilitarian. Instead of serving to contain social pressures, they actively sought out enemies. In the case of Nazism, once in power, and the Socialist and Communist opposition executed or incarcerated in concentration camps, the police turned to Jews and certain disadvantaged groups: the "feeble minded," the dark complexioned, dwarfs.

Premised on Marxist assumptions, the enemies chosen by Stalin belonged to certain social and political categories: kulaks, petite bourgeoisie, English secret agents, and Trotskyites. What happened in both countries was similar. The police took control of the state and wantonly pursued the directives of a psychopathic leader. These perverse societies can be termed "abnormal" because the repressive system serves no constructive social function. It is quite common for police to seize control in societies destabilized by economic and revolutionary crises.

Stalin has been dead since 1953. The First Secretariat of the Communist Party is no longer a megalomaniac, and the USSR has returned to a certain kind of social rationality. Society was ravaged under Stalin. But Brezhnev wants to perserve the status quo. No one

denies that the goals of the present regime are preservative. It may be for certain "advances" as long as there is no fundamental change. Thus, we are confronted with a "normal" regime. The purpose of its *repressive system* is to *conserve* society.

Although the Soviet system has been consistently repressive, it is essential to distinguish between the varieties of *functions* that this repression served. The dictatorial Lenin set up a basically "rational" system of repression, insofar as it had for its goal the defense and preservation of Bolshevism. Stalin erected an abnormal variety which was both indiscriminant and aimless. Under Brezhnev, the police are again directed against real opponents of the regime, for well-defined political and social reasons.

Why does the Soviet system remain a police state after sixty years of Communism? Since the politically orthodox Russian considers his society as inexorably leading to perfection, the slightest inner dissension wounds his quasi-religious sensibility. His fanaticism, an extension of Stalinist madness, alone seems to account for the maintenance of a formidable police apparatus. Any ideological reservations are necessarily suspect. Since *class antagonisms* have supposedly been eradicated in Soviet society, they lack a social basis. Yet, this is not the only explanation.

Things can be seen in more prosaic terms. Soviet society has matured, and certain tensions have developed. The unequal distribution of power, ideological contradictions, flaws in the economic structure, and the nationality problem all mark mature pan-Russian Communism as a vulnerable system. The repressive apparatus is one cog in the social balance. Once again, we are confronted with a rational system. In the USSR of today, the repressive system is functional.[1]

The Essential Character of the New Class

There was never a social phenomenon better predicted and more analyzed than the genesis of the Soviet oligarchy from the dictatorship of the proletariat. The names for this oligarchy are numerous: bureaucracy, new class, new elite, along with other "official terms."

The degeneration of a system founded on the dictatorship of the proletariat and the common ownership of the means of production was foreseen even in Marx's time, by Bakunin. Bakunin's predictions

have been taken up and systematized by socialist reformers, by sociologists like Pareto, revolutionary Marxists like Rosa Luxemburg, and conservatives like Hilaire Belloc.[2] The latter wrote:

> It is more and more certain that the attempt to transform Capitalism into Communism in no way ends up at Communism, but rather ends up at a quite different phenomena of which the Communists never dreamed, ie., the SLAVE STATE. Such a state is composed of human masses constrained by law to work for the profit of a minority. But they are compensated for this restraint by a security that the old Capitalism could never give them.[3]

Here we have the history of Stalinism outlined before 1917. After the revolution, Western thought on totalitarian bureaucracies was indebted to *exposés* of Stalinism and the analysis of similarities between Stalinism and Hitlerism written by James Burnham.[4] The expansion of the bureaucracy and its increasing role in non-totalitarian societies also became the theme of Western sociologists and economists. We need only mention Max Weber, who analyzed bureaucractic irrationality, or J. K. Galbraith, who developed the idea of technostructure.[5,6]

To "outside" exposés may be added "internal" critiques of the Communist system. The evolution of the oligarchy has been denounced by certain apparatchiki purged from power, such as Trotsky. These analyses are rather limited. Milovan Djilas,[7] a Yugoslavian Communist who refused to join this new class, has presented us with a fairly definitive and reliable model. Eastern European sociologists, who fought the assimilation of their countries into the Soviet sphere (1945–47), have also refined our understanding of the way these new expoiting classes emerge.[8]

At the end of his study, *Five Communisms,* which investigated Russia, Yugoslavia, China, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba, Gilles Martinet writes:

> The history of the Communist movement is completely dominated by the appearance of a new leading class which should have been, but which is not, the proletariat.[9]

Almost everything has been said on this subject, even if it has not been read or digested. The majority of people in the West do not readily perceive the Soviet Union as having classes, economic exploi-

tation, and, consequently, latent social tensions. It seems as though the existence of the new Communist class must be repeatedly demonstrated.

The implications of sociological analysis are often not adequately drawn. Our economists, sociologists, and liberal politicians have not succeeded in clearly bringing home the idea that Communism produces class societies. Abstract sociological analysis cannot impress on the majority of Western readers a sense of the Soviet reality. They would have to experience this phenomenon first hand. The workers of Pest leaving for their jobs at five-thirty in the morning, the chic salons in the finer sections of Buda, the hospitals reserved for the higher-ups and intellectuals must be seen. The reality of the relations between worker and management in the factories must also be seen to *experience* the nature of class in the Communist system.

But how much more hard evidence is necessary to prove that the common ownership of the means of production and the dictatorship of the proletariat does not liberate men? Must our French Marxist-Leninists be reminded that Communist managers, like their Western counterparts, take advantage of their positions to sleep with their secretaries, as certain risqué novels coming from Communist countries suggest?

In a way, the novel remains the best introduction to an understanding of Communist society. Unfortunately, flesh and blood human relationships still belong more to literary than to sociological genres.

Despite being spied upon, forbidden to publish, and imprisoned, writers from Eastern European countries furnish the most true to life and useful descriptions of Communist societies. Would it be possible to *experience* Communism without novels; e.g., the "fiction" of Solzhenitsyn, Milan Kundera, and Gyorgy Konrad?

Science fiction is undoubtedly the most powerful and meaningful genre for understanding totalitarian phenomena. It weaves together the lives of real individuals in a way that transcends statistical categories. It describes societies which could almost serve as sociological models of the future, even if the portrait it draws sometimes lacks finesse. *We* by Eugene Zamyatin and *1984* by George Orwell are two excellent introductions to the study of Communism.[10,11] These works are less rigorous than "sociological" texts but also truer and more objective.

The Soviet Alternative to Petit-Bourgeois Egalitarianism

An analysis of the national distribution of income suffices to demonstrate the inegalitarian character of the system.

The salary scale in Eastern European countries, which reflects *official* gross earnings, roughly corresponds to salary scales in the most egalitarian capitalist countries, Sweden, West Germany, Holland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In the industrial sector of the Soviet Union, however, one salary may vary as much 2.6 times that of another. In 1968, the income of a high Soviet official was equal, on the average, to 2 or 2.5 times that of a manual laborer in Norway, West Germany, and the *United States;* 3 to 4 times that of a manual laborer in Sweden, Denmark, and the United Kingdom.

Personal income tax must be subtracted from these gross earnings. The progressive nature of income tax is quite extreme in social-democratic countries. Such a tax is almost negligible in the USSR, where direct tax counts for only 8 percent of budgetary appropriations and by and large is applied to marginal social categories, such as artists, writers, and bachelors. Thus, in social-democratic countries, there is an equalizing deduction which is absent in Communist countries. Social services, pensions, and retirement benefits put into effect by social-democracies in Northern Europe make whatever the Soviet system offers appear insignificant. *Official* income distribution shows the USSR to be as inegalitarian as moderately developed countries, such as France.[12]

Let us move on from a consideration of official gross income to a consideration of real income.

The problems which arise from "padding" incomes is fundamental to all state economies. In advanced capitalist countries, high-level bureaucrats and industrial managers attempt to escape income tax by placing a certain number of earnings and personal expenses in state or business accounts—such as travel, meals, cars, and apartments—that might only have a remote connection with work. In Communist countries, the privileged stratas do the same. But because there exists no means of popular control, it is unlimited. The abuse of the expense account is total. This phenomenon is not

unique in history. It is typical of all preindustrial societies with a strong central state—the England of the Tudors and the first Stuarts, the monarchy of Louis XIV, ancient India, etc.

To the already unequal earings in Communist countries must be added perquisites, which are almost impossible to document, such as automobiles, working/living quarters, specialty stores, foreign travel, and maids whose salaries are paid by the state. Some estimates have the ratio between worker and apparatchiki total earnings at 1 to 20 or 30.[13] But one could cavil endlessly over the real disparity of income in Communist systems. Income analysis is quite difficult even in open societies such as are in the West.

The weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* published a long article on the privileges of the new Soviet class.[14] The text and photos which accompany this inquiry depict the life-style of the oligarchy in detail —not only bureaucrats but also intellectuals and artists who are patronized by the system.

Actually, the income supplements granted by the "people's state" to the new privileged class are not very impressive when compared to *a Western scale.* The Soviet bourgeoisie has a standard of living comparable to our average white collar employee—an automobile, a comfortable or even plush apartment, a second home in the Russian countryside or on the Black Sea coast, an abundance of good food, a trip to a foreign country from time to time, or even the privilege of seeing an X-rated film, which is quite likely pornographic and certainly from the West. For a white or blue collar member of the middle class *in the West,* all this is not very remarkable. On the Soviet scale, however, these privileges are extraordinary. The typical Russian waits in crowded lines, for food, waits to be processed for an "apartment" or even a small room. He does not have the right to leave his country, to see a film which has not been approved—in short, to live a normal life.

French estimates of the disparity which exists in the distribution of real income show that a top executive on the average earns 20 to 25 percent more than a manual laborer.[15] This takes into account the phenomenon of income "padding" and tax "dodging."

The *income disparities* in France and the USSR are striking. However, a narrowly pecuniary point of view distorts the reality of the situation.

In France, the inequalities are *material.* A worker is free to buy what he wants, but generally cannot afford a high official's apart-

ment. In the USSR, inequalities certainly manifest themselves *materially,* but they are also *formalized.* An apparatchiki can have the state pay for a trip to the West, but a Soviet worker is not even permitted to take such a trip. An apparatchiki has a state car at his disposal, but a worker is not permitted to even own a car. The typical citizen is constrained by *unwritten laws,* which are nevertheless quite binding and forbid him the enjoyment of certain kinds of goods and liberties. Capitalism has monetized all social processes and, most surely, all inequalities. According to Marx, herein lies its greatness. However, the Soviet Union combines monetary and legal inequalities. Like France of the Old Regime, citizens in the Soviet Union are certainly unequal before the law.

Soviet society is more polarized than French society. Inequalities posited by law create two categories of citizens, "active" and "passive." There is a disparity in the scale of real income that corresponds to this legal dichotomy, which does not exist in developed Western societies.

In the USSR, the ratio of incomes of the general populace vary from 1 to 3. But the privileged class can have an income 20 to 30 times more than the nonprivileged class. In France, the income ratio of the middle class ranges from 1 to 5, 10, 15, 25, 30 or more. The existence of this progressively narrowing pyramid is the chief reason for the social stability of Western societies. It gives everyone the impression that he is simultaneously privileged and disadvantaged. Inflation can thus occur without provoking a revolution. The *Nouvel Observateur's* widely read research of the phenomenon of "Status in France" shows that Western citizens are fascinated by the question of their position on the social scale, and that they are often incapable of objectively placing themselves on it, without the help of objective and general research. On the other hand, status is known instinctively in the USSR. *Pravda* has no need to publish research on "Status in the USSR." Ninety-eight percent of their citizens daily experience the fact that they are not among the privileged.

The Archeology of Communist Societies

For lack of better documentation, an historian or archeologist often has to rest content with an analysis of housing and living arrangements in order to study social stratification. If this technique

is applied to the USSR, the result is remarkable. We begin with dachas and large apartments, and proceed to small apartments, which are often divided into several separate units. And lastly, we arrive at the concentration camps. After rumaging through the vestiges of a nuclear attack in a Soviet province, an archeologist would find Soviet society of today extremely hierarchical and fairly polarized. Why don't we accept this kind of analysis when applied to the USSR today? No one would think of doubting its application to the ancient cities of Babylon, Assyria, Crete, or Mycene. Perhaps it is because no copies of *Capital* or the *Communist Manifesto* exist in cuneiform or in Linear B.

Let's not be paralyzed by the uncertainty of various kinds of data. An archeological analysis suffices to show that Communist societies are inegalitarian. These income differentials naturally correspond to economic exploitation. The recognition of this fundamental inequality is indispensable, if a coherent model of the Soviet system is to be built. The machinery of repression does not exist without pressures to repress. And there are no serious pressures without inequalities.

The Happy Few

Certain kinds of perquisites enable us to quantify and delineate characteristics of the privileged class in the Soviet Union better than all the expostulations on social relations found in Marx, Lenin, and their followers.

Personal use of an automobile, whether for private or public purposes, sharply distinguishes the Soviet privileged class, as carrying a sword distinguished the French nobility of the Old Regime (i.e., the nobility of the sword, not of the robe). Officially, automobiles are furnished at a rate of about 5 per 1000 in the USSR. By subtracting taxis, the number of privileged families can be calculated. That puts the Soviet oligarchy at about 2 percent of the population of the USSR.

The privileged are members of the higher offices of the Communist party, directors of factories, the regime's intellectuals, orthodox artists, high bureaucractic officials and police administrators. High-level Communist party members fill many, but not all of these posts.

This view of the oligarchy in the USSR suggests that there is no coalescence of elites. Therefore, the apparatchiki do not form a

self-contained, dominating class. The privileged are so regardless of the organization to which they are joined, regardless of their relative economic position, regardless of current theories on "the non-antagonistic classes of Soviet society" emanating from Moscow, Leningrad, or the shores of the Black Sea. This does not even imply that they all share a conservatism. To deny the diversity of elites does not imply the denial of differences arising from different intelligences and temperaments.

In the West, we also have our own superprivileged, upper two percent—business executives, administrators, and high government officials who command large salaries. Yet, everyone would agree that the conflicts among these different groups as well are not very violent.

In a Prague restaurant, I met a young Communist East German, blond, solidly built, and outgoing, who was accompanied by a charming female, also a German Communist. He spoke English, but with some difficulty. Youth in Eastern European countries have a difficult time with foreign languages because they are not permitted to travel beyond the iron curtain. They therefore don't have the opportunity to practice speaking them. Moreover, they refuse to master Russian, although it is required as their second language.

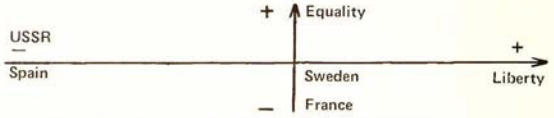
This student was an ardent partisan of the Communist system, particularly that of East Germany. According to him, thanks to the new regime, sons of peasants (like himself) could become managers and heads of certain industries in the German Democratic Republic. With a tinge of pride mixed with respect, he asserted that his girl friend was the daughter of a high Communist official. Isn't it a marvelous social system that allows talented sons of peasants to go out with daughters of the apparatchiki!

A blend of the social climbing of the Third Republic, the elements of a Hollywood love story, and the myth of *the state-made man* all make themselves felt here. What this anecdote shows is that a Communist system, economically flourishing like East Germany, can engender completely satisfied and even grateful elites.

Liberty and Equality

The Left in France, whether radicals or not, classifies social systems in a curious way, by employing the concepts of Liberty and Equality as two independent variables. A society can be free and

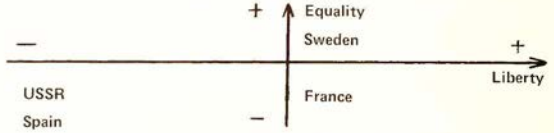
egalitarian, free and inegalitarian, authoritarian and egalitarian, or authoritarian and inegalitarian. The two variables are combined across the board with no combination being theoretically impossible. Let us take four countries as an illustration and place them on the following diagram. These countries will be placed according to how certain partisans of the extreme Left see them line up in terms of Liberty and Equality.



Spain (as of 1976) is represented as inegalitarian and without liberty; France is represented as inegalitarian and free, as is Sweden. But Sweden is shown to be slightly more egalitarian. This is because it is social-democratic. The USSR, which ended capitalist repression, is classified as egalitarian and unfree. It is commonplace to view the USSR as having a more radically leftist social system which goes farthest toward Equality. Of course, it is an authoritarian country and this is regrettable.... But this inconvenience allows for the resolute pursuit of the distant and inevitable perfection of Communist Democracy.

The choice is between liberty with inequality or equality under an authoritarian regime. All would agree that fascism provides us with an absolute negative model—inequality and servitude. What happens to this table when the USSR is no longer thought of as egalitarian, leftist, and socially advanced? It is placed just above Spain and just opposite France, in the quadrant designated authoritarian and inegalitarian. In sum, it is fascist.

Contemporary Sweden is most advanced in terms of Equality. It can be placed in the superior position, as a control for the rest of the countries in the diagram.



The ideas of liberty and equality cannot be separated out and treated as two independent variables. *In the long run,* a stable social system must either be liberal and egalitarian or despotic and inegalitarian. The combinations of liberty and inequality, or authority and equality can only represent transitory and unstable phases. In England of the nineteenth century, liberty had prepared the way for equality. In France of 1789, the claim of equality opened the way for the idea of liberty. A fascist revolution offers a contrary example. Liberty is suppressed so that certain privileges may not be threatened. In the USSR, Bolshevik authoritarianism has precipitated a new system of inequality. The people, deprived of the means of their own political defense, have fallen into economic servitude.

The socialist understanding of things, however, views liberty and equality as unrelated. Ultimately, this leads us to the thought of Guy Mollet (leader of the French Socialist Party in the Fourth and Fifth Republics—until 1971). Such platitudinous formulations as, *"between liberty and equality, I would choose liberty,"* or, *"between social justice and political democracy, I would choose political democracy"* are typical of this way of thinking. At other times, the positive aspects of communism and its gains in equality are embraced.

This view of things is interesting because it reflects more intellectual confusion stemming from a Republican slogan than dishonesty and cynicism. Liberty and equality are distinct as concepts, but not as things. In real life, contemporary regimes bear witness to the independence of these two phenomena. Invariably, inequality of power manifests itself in the distribution of wealth. Communist countries are no exception. There, the extreme concentration of power has led not only to inequality of wealth but also to inequality before the law.

State Monopolies and a State of Monopolies

An abstract conception of state power also leads to confusion. The way a Communist argues away freedom of the press illustrates this well. He would say that the press in a capitalist society is controlled by the great monopolies, the monopoly capitalism of the state, the so-called "200 families." There is really no "true"

freedom of the press. In Communist countries, "financial centers of power" have been eliminated and the newspapers, despite the *political* control of the state, are really more free. This understanding is predicated on a theoretical distinction characteristic of many Communist thinkers: *money* symbolizes inequality, and *political* power symbolizes a distinterested, impersonal force. Despite communist theory, there still exists a financial superpower in the USSR. It is called the state. However, it is forgotten that the Soviet oligarchy, more than the financial centers of power in the West, holds their workers by the throat. The *budget* of the Soviet state dwarfs that of General Motors, ITT, and Lockheed. *Money* and what it can do is still the issue.

Curiously, the Western Communists' abstract conception of state power is a consequence of the liberalism of developed capitalist countries. Certain honest but stubborn socialists are incapable of imagining what life is like in a country that controls all economic activities.

It is wrong to imagine that Soviet repression is limited to concentration camps, prisons, and psychiatric hospitals. The incarceration of dissidents—a widely used technique—is a last step, employed when all means of economic intimidation have failed. The state initially behaves like a typical hard-boiled employer. When it is confronted with a dissatisfied worker, it simply dismisses him. A loss of job often entails the loss of an apartment, since the state controls the majority of lodgings. This is how Poland expelled its Jews in 1968. It did not apply physical coercion. It simply deprived undesirable individuals the means of making a living. In the USSR, a dissident is first removed from his job and assigned to manual labor. If he refuses to go, he is accused of *social parasitism.* If he does not yield to pressure, the state goes on to the second step of repression —imprisonment. The power of the Soviet state is the power of the police, barbed wire, machine guns, and tanks. In this respect it is certainly no different from any other state, though this power is more widely used. But, at the same time, it wields complete *financial power,* which extends monopolistic control to over 22.5 million square kilometers of territory. Unlike Unilever, General Motors, Pechiney-Ugine-Kuhlman, and Grundig, which are really only small conglomerates, the Soviet state is a monopoly in the strict sense of the word. A monopoly over investments, hiring, the press, the fixing of

prices and wages, the granting of passports, automobiles, and the standards of truth.

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Fascism and Communism

The second diagram strictly identifies Fascism and Communism. It is often said that Communists and Fascists share a common taste for authority. But they also share certain inegalitarian practices, though generated in two different ways. Fascism crushed liberty in reaction against egalitarian demands. This is a logical and appropriate means to achieve inegalitarian ends. Communism, on the other hand, is born out of an error in calculation. An authoritarian regime seems to be necessary in order to *expedite* egalitarianism. However, these ends are lost in the process. One ruling class is simply substituted for another.

Fascism can instantly be recognized for what it is, authoritarian and inegalitarian. The Communist system must attain a certain level of maturity in order to settle itself into inegalitarian ways. Obviously, the ideological justifications of the two systems will always be different. Fascism accepts its image; Communism denies it. Marxism-Leninism remains the official doctrine in the USSR, and the Communist party in power continues to speak out on behalf of equality. Nonetheless, the dynamic of the Soviet system leads to certain of the secondary characteristics of Fascism, namely, nationalism and racism.

Why do the Chinese criticize Soviet revisionism? Quite simply, it is because they have yet to enter *the second phase of Communism,* when the privileges of the bureaucratic class appear to the leaders as the foundation of society. The death of Mao Tse-tung will release Chinese Communism to develop a more blatant hierarchy with regard to salaries. This hierarchy would correspond to that which already exists with regard to power. The Chinese cannot escape the laws which determine the development of Communist society. But the thirty-year time lag between the Russian and Chinese revolutions sheds great light on the character of the Communist system. The Chinese have been quick to point out elements of "Social Fascism" in the second phase of Soviet Communism. By "Social Fascism" is meant a fascism defended in socialist terms.

An Outline of the Phases of Soviet Communism

From 1917 to 1953, the time of the Revolution to the death of Stalin, the system developed somewhat haphazardly, though in keeping with the consequences of centralization and the inevitable absolutism of the Bolshevik party. The Bolsheviks did not have any desire to foresee the consequences of their actions. Under both Lenin and Stalin, power once again became the basis of inequality, in the form of hierarchical society. Inequalities of wealth very quickly followed. After Stalin's death in 1953, a period of vascillation ensued. Khrushchev seemed serious about liberalizing society, and, in 1962, Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* was published, a very harsh novel, or rather account, of life in Stalin's forced labor camps. These camps were soon emptied. Many Sovietologists wondered if the USSR was transforming itself into a new form of liberal socialism, but any such thoughts were soon dispelled by a renewed freeze. Stalinist-style repression, albeit less indiscriminate, was resurrected with Brezhnev. But why these reservations?

In 1953, it seems that the Soviet leaders did not have a clear view of the exact nature of their social system. Inequality was visible under Stalin, but it did not yet appear to anyone as the foundation of the system. The ruling strata were deceived in this. Solzhenitsyn considered the Khrushchev era miraculous. What made it seem so miraculous was the magnitude of this deception. History shows many other "miraculous" aberrations. Under Khrushchev, the Soviet leaders saw liberalization as a possibility because no one yet was resigned to the reality of economic exploitation and class antagonisms. Under Brezhnev, however, the Soviet privileged class has entered an era of cynicism or, if you will, an era of rationality. Brezhnev's current brand of Stalinism is absolutely necessary for the perpetuation of social inequalities, and a stifling of claims against it. Originally, Stalinism was not wholly reasonable. Those in the party had each other killed. People were liquidated simply out of principle and for the sake of statistical neatness. As with advanced Nazism, Stalinism, at first, did not rely on any class base. The police and their psychopathic leaders controlled the state machinery. This situation was not at all conducive to developing "class consciousness" among Soviet officials. Several years after normalcy returned, class con-

sciousness did take place. In order to maintain inequalities, all liberal impulses were suppressed.

This view is not shared by Alain Besançon, who thinks that the nature of the Soviet regime has not really changed since Stalin, and even since 1917.[16] He sees Khrushchev as "naive," a leader whose behavior deviated recklessly from the logic of the system. His dismissal was a reflex response tied to the psychology and ideology of the party. Besançon thinks that a psychological approach, which takes ideological convictions, beliefs, and the subconscious into account, can explain the realities of the system. The key to understanding the system lies entirely within the minds of its leaders. And their basic mentality changes little. He grants that "those who have experienced the system unanimously inform us that no one believes in it" or its ideology. But he concluded from this fact that "the strength of the Brezhnev regime lies in having understood that ideology does not need the support of deep conviction."

In contrast to Besançon, I think that the breakdown of the Soviet economy can be more easily and better understood in a way more faithful to Marx. It can be found in economic, social, and political premises that escape even the leaders themselves. These leaders may appear intellectually, ideologically, and psychologically aloof from the regime. But they are really the prisoners of a system they do not want, in which they do not believe, and from which they are unable to extricate themselves. The first part of this essay is devoted to an analysis of the "objective" elements of this breakdown. Certainly, the mentality of the Soviet oligarchy can be traced to autonomous psychological elements, to certain prejudices independent of the country's social and political situation. But today, the basic character of the apparatchiki reflects traits not accidentally similar to those that define the ordinary fascist's personality. This fact is, all told, rather reassuring.

There is, however, some truth to Besançon's interpretation and explication of Soviet phenomena. Admittedly, never before had the veil of lies which enveloped the facts about the USSR been so ably and systematically exposed. Bit by bit, Besançon demolished Western myths about "the fatherland of socialism." After reading him, one is left with the impression that the best models to explain the Soviet Union are to be found in Kafka rather than in Marx.

The Subconscious and the Mania for Self-Justification

The Trotskyite critique of bureaucratization and the reestablishment of a ruling class enraged the apparatchiki right to the end of Stalin's reign. The anti-Trotsky madness of 1945–53, when the Fourth International* was neither more important nor more menacing than today, was a subconscious defense on the part of the apparatchiki against the critique's validity. Since their self-awakening, the apparatchiki display a serene indifference toward Trotskyism.

The attacks against "petty-bourgeois egalitarianism," which Stalin used to justify an unequal distribution of wealth, disappeared from Communist rhetoric. It seems that the ideological madness of 1930–50 had it roots in the subconscious of the Soviet ruling classes. Since these classes now accept this inequality, ideology has clearly become more sane. The lies are given calmly, methodically, and coherently. It is no longer a question of dispelling the truth, but of masking it. To understand the mania for self-justification and repression, Freud alone leads the way.

Marxism and Permanent Destabilization

By and large, Soviet society is an inegalitarian class society, not unlike other societies in this regard. The bourgeoisie and the industrial magnates in Western Europe and the United States equally "exploit" their workers. But maintaining their position of superiority does not to the same extent require the formidable repressive machinery as their Soviet counterparts. Why is their repression permanent? Because there exists an unbearable discrepancy between the reality of the Soviet regime and the myth of its genesis; between the inequalities of today and the egalitarian messianism of 1917. This tension between ideological egalitarianism and inegalitarian reality is the biggest factor in the breakdown of the Soviet society.

*It was Marx's belief that the working classes in different countries had more in common with each other than with the ruling classes in their own countries. The "internationals" were recurrent attempts to give organizational expression to this.

The Fourth International was founded by Trotsky while in Mexico (1938) after his expulsion from the official Communist movement. It intended to supplant the Comintern (Third International) founded by Lenin in 1919. It attracted few followers. — Trans.

The ideological justification of power in the Marxist-Leninist system is fragile. A product of the most ambitious and most misguided social experiment of the twentieth century, the Soviet regime must come to terms with its official ideology. Above all, it must come to terms with Marxism, which calls for social experimentation, class struggle, equality, economic abundance, human liberty, in short, all that the Soviet system lacks. The new class came to being in an ideological nightmare.

Let us contrast a truly functional ideology to the Soviet ideology. Catholicism, for example, makes an entirely pragmatic promise of *eternal reward after death.* Such a promise has real impact, if one may speak in such a way. A "ruling class" (for lack of a better term) can go far with such a serviceable ideology. In other words, such an ideology serves to perpetuate the existing class structure. Marxism, which emerged as a critique of ideologies, is at somewhat of a disadvantage when faced with legitimating Soviet society, which in fact does not ensure liberty, abundance, the end of economic exploitation, or the disappearance of social classes. What is more important, its official atheism denies itself the comfort of an afterlife.

The new class in the Soviet Union has a big problem. Marxism destabilizes rather than preserves society. How can this social acid be neutralized?

The Marxian corpus contains both valid and false economic and sociological theories, in about equal proportions. Whether true or absurd, the theories which constitute the core of the Marxist complex of thought primarily ground themselves on the notion of class struggle. The *Manifesto* says very clearly that the "history of *every* society *until now* has been the history of class struggles. Free man and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, master and apprentice—in short, oppressors and oppressed—found themselves in *continual* opposition and engaged in an uninterrupted struggle, at some times hidden, at others open. Such a struggle has always ended in a revolutionary overthrow of the *whole* social order or in the mutual destruction of the classes in the struggle. In former historical eras, we find nearly *everywhere* a complex social order composed of different 'estates,' a multi-leveled hierarchy reflecting social conditions. In ancient Rome, we had patricians, knights, plebeians and slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, masters, apprentices, serfs. *Modern bourgeois society, born out of the breakdown of feudal society, has not put an end to class conflict. It*

has simply substituted new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of those which previously existed" (author's emphasis).

An examination of contemporary Soviety society needs only three words added to this provocative historical tableau. To the dialectical progression of free men and slaves, lords and serfs, bourgeois and proletariat can be added "apparatchiki and proletariat."

Wherever there are clear class distinctions, Marxism can be invoked in the name of egalitarian claims. The Soviet society of today is clearly polarized in terms of revenue, power, and, most obviously, the manner in which classes interrelate. The vulnerability of the Soviet system to the revolutionary use of Marxism is more outlandish than was Mao Tse-tung's adaptation of Marxist principles from 1930–40. The degree of polarization and level of economic development in the USSR today is most clearly reminiscent of the West in the 1860s (though establishing exact parallels is very complex and goes beyond my purposes here). Opposition between apparatchiki and workers has replaced that between bourgeoisie and proletariat. The scornful, authoritarian manner of the officials and oligarchs in the Soviet Union reminds one of the most extreme adherents of divine right in the nineteenth century.

The Soviets are accustomed to class-related terms and expressions, such as, "class struggle" and "economic exploitation." The character of Western civilization is understood in these terms. They are, consequently, very much attuned to notions of exploitation, oppression, and alienation. Were this class consciousness ever to be assimilated, it would diffuse throughout Soviet society.

To transform Marxism into an empty, meaningless litany, is absolutely crucial for the regime. The Soviets must speak, but not think, like "Marxists." The official ideology must transform Marx's texts into a collection of high-sounding but irrelevant rhetoric. If the Communist masses understood the true meaning of terms like "exploitation," "alienation," and "oppression," the system that dominates them could not survive.

The Soviet leaders necessarily live in fear. A slight theoretical slip, the smallest change in interpreting Marx's texts might liberate awesome social forces.

In his work, *The Class Structure Reflected in the Social Conscience,* Stanislas Ossowski (1897–1965), a Polish sociologist and student of Durkheim, shows very effectively how Marxism might be

used as a weapon against a system like the Soviet Union. His elaborations on social dichotomies are particularly interesting. This eminent sociologist could not, for political reasons, carry his analysis to its ultimate conclusions. The publication of his book in Poland, following the events of 1956 and the return of Gomulka to power, is in itself really quite extraordinary.

What follows is a concrete example of the potentially destabilizing effect of Marxist doctrine on Soviet society.

Boris Porchnev, a Russian historian specializing in the study of the Old Regime in France, wrote a book on *Popular Uprisings in 18th Century France* (1972). He gives a Marxist interpretation of the conflict between the state and masses at the time of the rise of absolutism and national taxation. Porchnev's interpretation of the social conflicts in the Old Regime is original but a little too schematic. At least this is the impression of a French reader of the book. For a Westerner, the peasant wars are an abstraction. But not for a Soviet. If a reader in the Soviet Union is in anyway subtle, he would have to sense a more than merely formal connection between the growth of the Stalinist state and that of the absolute state in France. There are two strong resemblances. One is the state's direct and centrally-controlled exploitation of the peasantry, which took the form of a tax in France and that of the kolkhoz* in the USSR. The other is the violent resistance of the peasantry to these measures. Civil war reigned in the Soviet countryside during the thirties. Porchnev's thesis was published well before the death of all those who advocated this bold attack on the peasantry. To this day a climate of hate very likely persists in the Soviet countryside, which is off limits to Westerners. It is important to note that Marxist scholarship, whether consciously or unconsciously, naturally tends to avoid open criticism of Communism. Every Marxist historical or sociological analysis published in the USSR has two levels. The surface level is orthodox while what lies beneath is critical. This is so with Porchnev's book. While speaking exclusively of the France of the seventeenth century, it furnishes a fairly sophisticated model to analyze the relations between the Soviet regime and its peasants. But the reader must be willing to dig for it. If this is done, it will be

*Kolkhoz—collective farm. In theory, the collective farms are "voluntary" farmer's cooperatives, democratically organized. In reality, party and state officials have forcibly imposed the organization of collective farms on the rural population and assumed its management. —Trans.

seen that his theory fits Soviet reality better than that of the Old Regime.

The Land of Great Promise (or *The Promised Land*), a film by Andre Wajda, which could have been seen in Paris theaters in March and April of 1976, furnishes another example of the destabilizing effect of orthodox Marxism in a genre more accessible to the masses than history theses. This magnificent film, both Manichean and Marxist, describes the birth of industry, a bourgeoisie, and a proletariat in Poland at the end of the last century. The characters are almost completely one dimensional—singleminded in their profit seeking in the case of employers and singleminded in seeking the means of existence in the case of workers. The three "heroes," all young employers—a Catholic Polish nobleman, a German, and a Jew—are right out of *Capital*. It is hard to find any humor in this violent and blunt film.

A content and well-fed Westerner sees in this film an unusually harsh but accurate critique of capitalism, a severe condemnation of its deepest sins. *The Land of Great Promise* represents an indignant and simplistic attack on capitalism, a mentality analyzed and criticized by Francois Revel in *The Totalitarian Temptation*.[17] All the elements of stereotype are present, including an idealization of the feudal past set off against bourgeois malice and lust for blood and sex.

When seen in Communist countries, this film is perceived quite differently. Wajda's Marxism is absolutely orthodox. In a Polish setting, the film takes on certain provocative qualities which might be lost on a Frenchman. The last scene of the film sees German, Jewish, and Polish bourgeoisie, deeply united by common interest, fire upon striking workers. A Frenchman immediately recalls the time when, in his country, troops were sent against workers in the North and in the Pas-de-Calais during the nineteenth century. Whether a worker or intellectual, a Pole recalls what happened *six years ago* (1970) in his country when tanks were sent against the workers of Szczecin and Gdansk, who rose up against the drastic rise in basic food prices. No one in France really knows what a true class struggle is. In Communist countries the working class is frequently fired upon, as they were in Western Europe during the nineteenth century. They have personally witnessed what is a set piece of *Marxist* art and literature. Consequently, the *Marxist* representation of these events produces an unintended effect. *The Land of Great Promise* is abso-

lutely in line with Communist party doctrines. Its surface meaning, the only meaning perceived by Westerners, presents a straightforward anticapitalist caricature. For Eastern Europe it has a hidden allegorical meaning. Real Communism has all the legendary vices of the capitalism condemned by Marx: misery, class conflict, and alienation. The official Marxism of Eastern European countries has deep masochistic strains.

Marx's texts fail to provide a very accurate account of the realities of capitalism in the 1970s. However, his sociological account of the rise of capitalism and his economic analysis of the precapitalist modes of production are very useful for understanding the Soviet system.

The persistent thrust of Marxist doctrine encourages a reinvestigation of Soviet history and an accurate analysis of class antagonisms characteristic of developed Communism. This is why Marxism itself causes Communist societies to be fragile, anxious, and repressive.

Equilibrium at High and Low Levels of Tension

The Soviet masses have been manipulated far too much to be apathetic, in the strict sense of the word.

Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, and perhaps even Tadjiks have inherited from the 1917 Revolution and subsequent experiences an acute awareness, however warped, of political and social phenomena. Yet, this awareness is infinitely more dangerous than the absolute indifference which insulates Third World peasants.

Certain Soviet students readily boast to visiting Western students who are eager to hear about the superiority of the Communist system. Their diatribes are a little removed from reality; nevertheless, they are informed about politics, economics, and social issues. If the feeling of dissatisfaction were to spread in the USSR, the flaws of the system would become clearly visible, exposing the pretensions of the ruling class.

The level of literacy among the Russian masses presents another difficulty to the Soviet oligarchs which is not present for their Third World colleagues. The utter apathy of Third World peasants involves a social ignorance exacerbated by the otherworldly focus of religion.

In the case of the Soviet Union, political equilibrium is much more precarious. It exists on a *high level of tension.* Factors of instability (i.e., literacy and social awareness, even if it is somewhat warped) and of *stability* (i.e., indoctrination and police repression) *come together in a volatile equilibrium.* The apathy of Third World peasants frees their regimes from having to deal with ideological opposition. It is a situation of ideological inertia where equilibrium is attained in the complete absence of any factor of instability. Equilibrium occurs at a *low level of tension* which generally does not necessitate concentration camps, unlike equilibrium in Communist countries, attained at a *high level of tension.*

The Different Totalitarian Ideologies

Communism is only one variant of a more general model. The USSR is an outstanding example of a society ruled by a single party, organized along military lines.

The essential character of Communist-style totalitarianism is revealed in its ideology, which is Marxist in theory and radically egalitarian. Islam plays a similar role in "statist" Arab countries as that played by Marxism-Leninism in the USSR. Arab socialism is no more or less "genuine" than Soviet socialism. Both are shams. The fact that Islam appears more alien to Europeans than *their* fashionable versions of Marxism-Leninism isn't significant. As backward as Islam is, it does not run counter to the spirit of social justice expressed in Arab socialism. The same cannot be said for Marxism-Leninism and social justice, which does not even receive lip service in Soviet socialism. In both cases, a privileged class has taken control of the machinery of the state. The state's control of the economy absolutizes the power of this caste over society. But because the Arab system is not based on egalitarian principles or seen to embody certain ideals, there can be an evolution toward more just and democratic forms. Unlike the Soviet system, it is not hamstrung by the myth of the Revolution and an ideology based on social engineering and the inevitability of class conflict.

What has allowed the Bolsheviks to convince the world that their brand of Communism is at once unique and universal?

The size of Russia and the Great Depression have probably played a large role in promoting this idea. After all, the Depression era witnessed other intellectual derailments.

Clarity has been lent to the situation by the appearance of Asian Communists, particularly in China and Viet Nam. As revealed by the Little Red Book and the rule of its leaders, Chinese Communism is at once more simplistic and less lunatic than the Soviet variant. At least this is what is heard asserted over cups of jasmine tea.

Why is it, in fact, that we still take Communist claims to be a universal movement representing universal principles seriously? Although it might not seem so at first, Asiatic cultures are very close to Western cultures in a number of respects. Their attitude toward work is not so different from the Puritan and Victorian ethic. Japan has won the title "capitalist" as easily as China has won the label "Communist." Cuba, where the national temperament is clearly less Victorian, has earned its "Communist" title thanks to Soviet backing and the preponderant Caucasian element of its population. In contrast, the efforts of the former French Congo to make itself recognized as a popular and Communist system are thwarted by Western racism. A Black cannot be a good Communist because his cultural symbols are too alien to us. A system which decrees 1) centralized planning and 2) the common ownership of the means of production is not Communist if it does not imitate Western culture, convince us of its Marxist-Leninist authenticity and make its citizens work hard.

The cultural differences among Communists are important. But all dictatorial and oligarchical systems, which are *revolutionary and egalitarian at their origin,* share in their advanced stages several internal contradictions which are not present in popularly inspired, militaristic fascisms.

The ordinary, non-Communist dictators of the Third World are as odious as their Communist counterparts. But the evolution of their countries is not paralyzed by the fragility of their social and political structures. The masses are not conditioned by Marxism; the rulers are not saddled by an aggressive ideology promulgated by their revolutionary ancestors. Their culture is in "equilibrium" insofar as there generally does not exist any *disparity between the standard of living and the level of literacy.* Generally, as an economy advances, a country becomes more literate and more and more people enter the ranks of the privileged.

Not feeling themselves threatened by a literate peasantry and proletariat, it is conceivable that the nonsocialist oligarchs of the Third World will dare to adopt more democratic forms of government which will better meet the problems of economic development. At a certain point, capitalism must raise the level of life of its working

class, if it is to escape crises of overproduction. Such pressure does not operate on Communist systems.

The Longevity of Communism and the Brevity of Fascism

When it is compared with Fascism, in its more common form, Communism is distinguished by its powers of *endurance*. The function of a Fascist government is to bring a liberal privileged class under the will of the dictator, perhaps through certain ideological blandishments. What Communism promises is infinitely more demanding. It requires not the conversion of the privileged class in power but rather the *complete change of the ruling class.* It is easy to see why the Communist process is longer and more radical.

Rulers in a Fascist regime have little cause for guilt. They do not depose elites and *generally* do not recruit an entirely new class of rulers. Simply put, they do not recreate society. Nor do they encumber themselves by immediately undertaking progressive measures, which introduce all sorts of germs of future instability—Marxism, literacy, etc. This is why Franco's Spain can liberalize after forty years of Fascism while the USSR is still retarded after sixty years of Communism.

This understanding of Fascism clearly does not apply to Nazism, which overpowered the traditional ruling classes. Every fascist movement does pose a very real threat to the traditionally privileged classes.

In a certain sense, Communists and Fascists oppose each other for good reasons. Communism and Fascism are not the same, though the machinery of economic exploitation and the corresponding system of power are very similar. But Communism's revolutionary origins continue to weigh on it and mark mentalities and ideologies for a long time after. This confers on it a great deal of inertia. Undoubtedly, the reason why certain Soviet dissidents prefer Chile to Viet Nam is because Fascism is infinitely more reversible than Communism. Personally, I would prefer not to have to choose between an extended or brief incarceration.

Chapter 2

THE PROLETARIAT UNDER ITS DICTATORSHIP

The extreme brutality of the Bolshevik leaders led to the rapid enslavement of the Soviet proletariat, whose lot rapidly came to mirror that of workers described by Engels in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1844). But the miserable life of the Soviet proletariat cannot be understood merely in material terms. Today their status is an historical curiosity. It consists of two apparently contradictory components. In theory, the working class is glorified as the catalyst of October 1917. But in reality the workers are at the mercy of the bosses in the factories, deprived of the right to strike and to petition their grievances.

Whether from the Right or the Left, heads of industry, engineers, and statesmen who travel in the USSR come back astonished. Though detente and trade relations may dampen their outspokenness, they have first-hand experience of the brutality that marks industrial relations in the country ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Theoretically, *official* wages favor the blue collar over the white collar worker, though this clearly does not hold true, in reality, for the managerial class. It is estimated that the *real* wages of the head of a factory can be 10, 20, or 30 times greater than those of a worker.[18] Also keep in mind that city dwellers are generally substantially better off than those in the countryside. These official comparisons are a little misleading because of the role played by moonlighting, the black market, and small bribes which put certain

goods and services beyond the reach of workers, but not others. In actual fact, industrial workers are not better payed than white collar functionaries.

The Soviet proletariat, glorified but exploited, is in a certain sense the Communist equivalent of what "the ideal woman" represents in the West. The basic psyche of the Soviet proletariat, confronted by the discrepancy between his real and theoretical status, must be more than a little discomforted. The Soviet system is not conducive to harmonious personalities.

The servility to which the worker is subjected in the Soviet Union varies in intensity.

- The ordinary worker is legally obligated to work. He is registered, as were the workers in the Second Republic, and is forbidden to change his place of residence without administrative authorization.
- The next category of worker has a similar legal status; but he finds himself forced to work in a pioneer village in Siberia.
- Next comes those drafted into the military. For two years, Soviet youth perform tasks ordinarily reserved for immigrant workers in the West—the upkeep of roads, for example, The slavish nature of the work in this case is particularly blatant, since it is executed through military discipline.
- The lowest level of servility is occupied by the forced labor camps. Here are found recalcitrant workers and independent-minded proletariats. The forced labor camps are the logical result of the Soviet economic system.

It must not be believed that the "work camps" or Soviet concentration camps are filled mainly with liberal intellectuals. By and large, it is workers and peasants who are sent there. For every Solzhenitsyn, Kopelev, or Plyutch in the camps, there are probably a thousand workers. Their only privilege lies in escaping insane asylums and insulin injections. This is the tribute paid by the oligarchy to the working class for the leading role they played in the "establishment of socialism."

A Hungarian official explained to me that intellectuals are no longer being imprisoned in his country, but more and more workers are. Every arrest of an intellectual provokes an outcry in the West. First the Anglo-Saxon press then the French press becomes indignant. A writer, a poet, a sociologist is released from jail. No one in France, Great Britain, or the United States is concerned about coming to the aid of a metallurgy worker, imprisoned because he uttered

a few anti-Communist words. What follows is something which reportedly occurred in Hungary. At a public dance, a Communist official tried to pick up a worker's girl friend. An exchange of insults and an altercation followed. The outraged worker allowed himself to utter an ambiguous but obvious threat: "*You* are going to face some difficult times ahead." The worker was thrown in the slammer. No one in the West would come to his defense. For workers in Eastern European countries, *you* refers to Communists. For the more politically aware workers in the People's Democracies, *they* or *them* refers to members of the government, who are foreign to their world and despised. Class conflict permeates daily life. A worker in Eastern Europe thinks of a Communist official as a bourgeois. In the German *Democratic* Republic, the formal form of the second person is used when addressing a particular comrade. Members of the Communist hierarchy are referred to by *Sie-Genossen.*

Hungary is beginning to liberalize its policy of issuing passports to the West. Each year, about 250,000 Hungarians will fly to France, Germany, Great Britain, the United States and elsewhere. But only intellectuals and those from the middle or ruling classes are authorized to leave. The proletariat must content itself with traveling in the corridor formed by the People's Democracies from the Baltic to the Black Sea, which separates the Capitalist block from the USSR. Passports to the "fatherland of socialism" are reserved for the elite. Typically, passports fall into three categories in Eastern European countries, one for the West, one for the satellite countries and another for the USSR. The workers come last in the order of priority.

Czechoslovakia is probably the only country in Eastern Europe where the working class was not immediately enslaved. It is also the only one of the People's Democracies where the proletariat played a role in supporting the coming into power of the Communist dictatorship. The proletariat was a participant in the Prague coup. Following the war, in the other People's Democracies, the working class was either nonexistent as in Bulgaria and Rumania or it was adamantly opposed to the Communists, perhaps because of a fear of Russia as in East Germany, Hungary, and Poland. At the outset, the Czechoslovakian proletariat supported the Stalinist regime of Gottwald-Novotny. Eventually it lost its liberties, the rights to organize and petition the government. Until 1965, it was compensated for this by a fairly equalized distribution of income between the proletariat and the Communist party. The support of the proletariat explains

the exceptional stability of the Czechoslovakian regime in the 1950s when the German proletariat (1953), the Polish proletariat (1956), and the Hungarian proletariat (1956) were fighting to loosen the Soviet and Communist vise.

Why then did the Soviet proletariat, which had supported if not caused the October Revolution of 1917, become enslaved so rapidly? After the soviets and the autonomy of particular factories were abrogated, and after the Bolsheviks attempted to militarize the work force—Trotsky's great brainchild—the Russian workers very quickly turned against the Bolshevik regime. In other words, finding themselves enslaved the workers rebelled and were further enslaved.

The Kronstadt uprising marks the time of the rupture between the Bolsheviks and the Russian proletariat. Frederic Bon and Michel-Antoine Burnier very aptly point out that on the threshold of state planning, which was to accelerate industrial development, a bonafide working class did not really exist. The 1917 Petrograd workers were either integrated into the Red Army and the government apparatus, liquidated as counterrevolutionaries, or they died in the famines, epidemics, and battles of the Civil War period.[19] The Soviet Union in 1929 was a country without a worker tradition. The present-day proletariat was created by the regime, an outgrowth of the frenetic industrialization which took place between 1930 and 1950. The Soviet working class is a creature of the Soviet system. It was virtually nonexistent at the regime's origins, and until about 1970, it lacked both will and strength. This inherent weakness, combined with a manner of rule unique to the Bolsheviks, contributed greatly to the servile nature of the Soviet worker.

The Soviet ruling class is no longer fanatic. It no longer believes in social justice through violence and force. Yet, this new class still inherits much from the past. The ruling class in feudal times, arising from the debris of the Roman Empire, for a long time retained the brutal, violent, and crude habits of the pillaging Germanic tribes, from which it was often descended. In a similar way, the Soviet ruling class has kept the harsh, authoritarian style and the penchant for hierarchical organization that characterized the Bolshevik party. They are not as blind as their ancestors, but they remain violent and authoritarian. The Bolsheviks wanted to reform society through violence. Today, the party is willing to employ this same violence, but to preserve their own privileges.

In his memoirs, Milovan Djilas explains that doubt first entered his

mind about the nature of the Communist system because of the drinking bouts that entertained the oligarchy in the Kremlin from 1945–48. The brutality, vulgarity, moral depravity, and scorn displayed by Stalin's entourage appalled this upright revolutionary who emerged from the Yugoslavian underground, formed to resist the German invader.[20]

The economic exploitation of the working class on the part of the privileged in the Soviet Union is aggravated by their authoritarianism. This characteristic is not a necessary feature of all Communist systems. The specific origin is found in Bolshevism. But because of Russia's preeminent position in the Communist system, it manipulated the oligarchies of the satellite countries. After the war, "Stalin's puppets" were installed in the People's Democracies. Educated in Stalin's seraglio, they imitated their master remarkably well. But today, only the oligarchy of the GDR can even claim to rival the Kremlin in its authoritarianism. There are certain obvious affinities between the old Prussian culture and the Russian style of Communism. East Germany made the transition from Nazism to Communism without a hitch.

The Russian style of Communism is not simply a means of economic exploitation; it is a culture, which is barbarous in Western eyes.

A narrowly "economic" analysis of the Soviet social system must be avoided. Serious attention must also be paid to "culture," to a complex of tradition inherited from the past and without direct relevance to economic matters.

Economic exploitation is implicit in the "Communist mode of production," which is characterized by the "common" ownership of the means of production and centralized planning. However, it does not necessarily entail the extreme brutality that marks the social relations observed in the Soviet Union. How authoritarian an oligarchy is varies according to certain local traditions and the extent of worker consciousness. These factors determine the intensity of exploitation and the sharpness of hierarchical cleavages. Italy was incapable of producing a form of fascism as pure as that in Nazi Germany. The seizure of power by Italian Communists could never result in a Communist system as harsh as that of East Germany. The coming to power of Italian Communists (if they could by termed Communists at all) would at worst bring about a mild dictatorship, entailing a certain amount of inequality. It is one of the great myster-

ies of the twentieth century how the Western world could assume that the Soviet system represents a pure and universal type of Communism, as if such a thing could ever exist. In Hungary, economic exploitation on the part of the Communists takes place without disguise but also without excessive brutality.

In 1956, with arms in hand, the Hungarians cast their lot against a Communist system which was unremittingly Stalinist and Sovietized. Radical opposition, on the part of the masses, and especially on the part of the working class, forced the regime to a compromise: Kadarism replaced Rakosism.

Ideological ambivalence never existed in Hungary, as the working class was never tempted by Communism. In 1919, Bela Kun, a staunch proponent of collectivization and temperamentally inclined to stop at nothing—a thorough-going Leninist but a bad tactician—was more disgusted than encouraged by the Hungarians. In 1945, the Communist party had between 1,500 and 2,000 members in a country of 10 million inhabitants. In other words, it was not very substantial.

Today, Hungarian Communism seems to be a gigantic farce. Why? The ideological struggle has come to an end in Hungary or is contained within narrow limits by the Kremlin. The key to power lies not in the consent or resignation of the masses but in the Red Army. Propaganda and brutalization are no longer necessary. The Hungarians know that if they make a move, the tanks will roll, as they did in 1956. Paradoxically, these well-defined limitations are seen by the Hungarians as instrumental in making their country "the happiest outpost of the Socialist camp." In their private conversations, Hungarian intellectuals and students are quick to rail against their regime. Hungary is a classic nonproletarian dictatorship where one can *think* and *say* but not *do* what one wants.

Nevertheless, Hungary under Kadar is not quite as "liberal" as Spain was under Franco or Italy under Mussolini. It does not allow its citizens freedom to travel to a foreign country. In Budapest, to get a passport approved involves delicate negotiations. Even with these difficulties, Hungary still has the most liberal passport policy of all the Eastern European countries behind the iron curtain. First, the authorities make sure that the one requesting a passport leaves his family in Hungary. This is to guarantee that such a person will return. Despite these precautions, typical procedures in all Communist countries, the percentage of defections remains high, particu-

larly among students sent to Paris or London. Parenthetically, the regime seems to accept these temporary desertions with a certain equanimity. A student may have been authorized to live in Paris for only four months. If he returns after spending twelve months in the West, he has obviously toyed with the idea of never returning at all. He may see his passport confiscated for five years, but he is not expelled from the university. The rather easy-going character of the Hungarian regime must be emphasized. Bear in mind that the sealing off of frontiers is not merely a feature of totalitarianism; it is a primary concern, a policy distinguishing *all* Communist countries from classical dictatorships, with the possible exception of Yugoslavia. Hungary's passport policy marks its totalitarianism as lukewarm and soft. The Communist party—or the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party, for the initiated—has lost the totalitarian desire to propagandize, and thus no longer ideologically bludgeons the people it controls. Nevertheless, opponents of the system are still forbidden to leave.

The abandonment of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric exposes the social relations characteristic of advanced Communism for what they are. Hungarian bureaucrats and technicians can be found who quite openly admit to being no different from their Western counterparts. In an excellent film by Claude Weisz and Eva November, one of these Communist managers explains that his social function is identical to that of a Renault executive.[21]

There is a remarkable analysis of the worker's condition in this film. A Hungarian union official explains that *"the role of unions in a socialist regime is not to defend the workers but to increase production."* Unions in the USSR have a similar perspective on things. Certain laborers relate that the lot of the worker in Hungary is scorned, that there is no communication between workers and foremen or directors. Workers are subjected to satchel checks when leaving their factories, to ensure they haven't stolen anything. A sizeable police force lends a rather fascist aura to the scene. Perhaps a better term for these police would be the "industrial militia."

A brief glance at the architecture of Hungarian homes goes a long way in elucidating differences in the social hierarchy and levels of wealth. In the faubourgs of Budapest are housing projects; villas and gardens dot the hills of Buda; and toward Pasareti, apparatchiki, technocrats, and intellectuals reside.

High government officials in Hungary freely admit the obvious. A

recent reform of the Hungarian economy intended to make various enterprises more autonomous and responsible for their shortcomings, but also to make them distribute among their employees at least a part of their profits. Hungarian enterprises are being granted more independence in setting their own prices and salaries. If the goals of reformers are reached, there will be little difference between the Hungarian system and the economic systems of certain capitalist countries where the overall direction of the economy is guided by nationalized banks and the state's budget. A fairly rigorous control over the development of the economy can be achieved through the manipulation of credit. The motor which drives the new economic machinery in Hungary is the policy of providing monetary incentives for workers to increase management's profit. But even if wages are freed from centralized planning, it will be left to the industrial managers to determine their rate, not the unions. The role of the union is found, not in representing workers, but in increasing production. In sum, the heads of industry may share their profits, but the workers still have no way to promote their interests and no right to strike. Unions lack autonomy; officials are not elected. The result is increasing social inequality and unrestrained profiteering on the part of managers. In Yugoslavia, the workers have a voice in the elections of their managers. This differs markedly from the Hungarian system, where the managers are nominated by the state.

Soviet enterprises lack the autonomy which exists in Hungary, but the privileges of management are comparable. In Hungary, technocrats and managers who have a certain technical expertise are given a bit more voice in decision making than bureaucrats and Communist party personnel, who still maintain undivided power in the USSR. However, the importance of the differences between these two privileged groups, in terms of income and power, should not be overstressed in comparing their respective economic systems.

In the People's Democracies, there is a natural limit to a growth in bureaucratic privileges and the control over workers' salaries—despite the absence of elections and truly free unions—through riots and insurrections. The Budapest workers brought down the regime inherited from the Rakosi period which kept wages at subsistence levels. The workers of Poznan and Gdansk repeatedly forced the Polish Communist Party to retreat. The price paid for a salary increase in a People's Democracy, however, is fairly high. In 1970, 200 died in Poland. In 1956, 10,000 died in Budapest. These

uprisings tended to make the Communist leaders more cautious. In 1970, the Polish riots on the Baltic were followed by an increase in wages, not only in Poland but in other Communist countries.[22]

Other factors contribute to significantly keep privilege and petty brutality in Hungary in check, which are inoperative in the USSR. First, the Hungarian "red bourgeoisie" is not an autonomous ruling class. Kadar is still tied to the Kremlin. Hungary is not the master of its own foreign policy, nor does it have complete control over its domestic policy. Certain limits must not be breached. Hungary has to remain a member of the Warsaw Pact and it was obligated to send some token regiments to Bratislava in August 1968, when Brezhnev decided to "normalize Czechoslovakia." The USSR still demands a certain amount of censorship, and the Red Army remains the foundation of the Hungarian social system. The notoriously abrasive manner of the Kremlin leaders must engender a repressed but profound antagonism between the Soviet leaders and their Hungarian colleagues, who must stomach their humiliations. Members of the Hungarian Communist Party are not really in power. They serve merely as intermediaries between their Soviet masters and the Magyar people. However, more and more, their identity and fidelity is becoming tied to Hungary. Kadar's regime and the Hungarian people see their interests as similar. Hungary is getting richer; the standard of living is rising rapidly; automobiles and televisions are everywhere and people are well fed. Enormous advances have been made over the pre-War period. The ruling class in Hungary effectively fulfills its economic role. As in Western countries, as the bourgeoisie gets richer, so too do the people. Hungarians are also fully aware that their country is the most liberal in the socialist camp. And they know that their leaders can go no farther down the path of liberalization without incurring Soviet intervention. Kadar genuinely seems to be popular and has tried to embellish his image. The story is circulated that in 1956, the Soviets forced Kadar to assume control of the regime. If he had refused, he would have been hung. They also say that he has wept three times in his life, once at his trial during one of Stalin's purges, once when Imre Nagy was executed, and finally when Hungary was forced to participate in the intervention of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Kadar is not naturally a malicious man, so the story goes. He was tortured by the police under Rakosi, who indeed was a psychopath of the first order.

The key to the system lies in the remarkable intelligence of the

Hungarian people and leaders, who, since 1956, know just how far they can go without irritating the Russians.

Patriotism, which is once again felt in Hungary's upper classes, forges links with the people in spite of economic exploitation.

Soviet leaders are autonomous. Theirs is the nationalism of a conquerer, as opposed to the patriotism of the Magyar. Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny and others have absolute power. They are at the peak of the hierarchy. There is not even sympathy for the Russian people, who remain the most miserable of peoples in the Soviet sphere. According to the official statements of Hungarian Communists, their goals are to enrich their country on the model of Western economic growth. They have abandoned their objective to have worker participation in industrial decision making and are not at all concerned with promoting social equality. There is but one difference between them and contemporary Western bourgeoisies: they claim that in their country, the industrial revolution took place painlessly, thanks to social security and guaranteed employment. Full employment and social services are the last remaining myths about Communist countries which must be exposed.

In Communist countries, full employment is realized only in theory. In fact, wages are *fixed* so low that the majority of workers and employees must supplement their income by moonlighting. In Eastern European countries, salaries are roughly equivalent to what a person on the dole receives in Western countries. Guaranteed employment provides only modest security to the peoples of Eastern Europe. Socialized medicine has completely broken down. Nurses and doctors are underpayed. In order to receive proper care, the sick must supplement their wages by a cash payment. This is what an old woman says in the Claude Weisz and Eva November film. This phenomenon is not of recent origin, as the old Hungarian joke shows us. In 1946, Rakosi met Truman in Washington:

"How much does an American worker earn?" he asked.

"Between 80 and 100 dollars a week."

"And how much does he spend?"

"Between 40 and 50 dollars."

"What does he do with the difference?"

"That does not concern us," explained Truman. "We are a free country. . . .

"Well, how much does the average worker in Hungary earn?"

"1000 forints a month."

"And how much does he spend?"
"Between 1300 and 1400 forints."
"But where does he get the difference?"
"Oh!," explains Rakosi, "That doesn't concern us. We are a free country."[23]

Chapter 3

THE SLUGGISH SOVIET ECONOMY

The official rate of growth of Soviet industry is progressively declining, and it seems likely that the economy is approaching a stationary level, a stagnation comparable to what happened to the Czechoslovakian economy beginning in 1963. But, if official statistics are realistically deflated, it has already occurred. The Soviet economy has stalled.

This phenomenon must be considered inevitable as well as irrevocable. It is an outgrowth of the Soviet economic system. It simultaneously affects both the agricultural and industrial sectors. Soviet leaders in 1976 foresee a rate of growth of only 4.3 percent in industrial production, compared to 7.5 percent in 1975 and 8 percent in 1974. A deficit of nearly 60 to 80 million tons of grain has been incurred over this same time period. It is amusing to see the USSR ensconced in stagnation at the same time that the crisis of capitalism has been hailed. In the USSR, the advantages and disadvantages of zero growth are not abstract discussions. There will be no recovery.

This breakdown is taking place at an extremely modest level of development, which can be accurately assessed by analyzing the imports and exports of the Soviet Union. In 1966, 81.3 percent of the USSR's exports were raw materials and fuel. Forty-four percent of the imports were machinery and four-wheeled vehicles. The character of these exchanges are typical of an underdeveloped country. It is similar to that of Iran or Venezuela. Using this standard, even a country such as Spain is more advanced.

Planning and Rapid Economic Development

The Communist model promises rapid economic development through planning. Primary attention is given to construction of the necessary infrastructure—a transportation system, sources of energy, and heavy industry. Once this is established through centralization, such a system cannot then accommodate itself to the decentralization necessary for a diversified economy and the development of mass consumption.

The majority of capitalist systems have, in fact, already passed through certain centralized phases. At those times, the state played a crucial role in manipulating credit and legalizing entities such as the holding company, which was crucial in developing our network of communication—railroads, highways, and canals. Japan is certainly one of the best examples. There the state first created and then denationalized heavy industry. In Russia, the Tsarist state was also engaged in a policy of rapid industrialization, and proved to be very successful until 1917. Brazil in 1975, fascist and economically dynamic, nationalized 72 out of 200 of its largest corporations.

Yet, even in the United States, the classical home of liberal theories, the federal government played a decisive role in the development of railroads by granting concessions to certain companies. Governmental protectionism is generally a characteristic of nascent capitalism, Great Britain excluded.

All this goes to show that centralized planning played a large role in furthering the development of capitalism. Reconstruction of post-World War Two Western Europe has again shown that capitalism has not always been incompatable with centralization, in times when it is demonstrably necessary and when it is a question of reestablishing a national infrastructure. In France, for example, economic planning was first directed toward allocating resources of electriciy, coal, steel, and cement. Such policy was executed in a quite authoritarian manner. After the 1929 Crash, capitalist states were again forced to intervene in the economy in order to establish an overall equilibrium between production and consumption. The current crisis will probably necessitate a renewal of interventionism. A large part of the vitality of capitalism consists in its skill in delicately regulating the amount of centralized control with creative laissez-fairism, in contrast to the dogmatic attitude of the Soviets with regard to cen-

tralized planning. In the middle of the nineteenth century, bourgeois economists were paralyzed by the fear of a feudal state; weighed down by the past, they were also terrorized by the future possibility of a socialist state. In response, they invented the myth of a liberal, noninterventionist state and the notion of the self-regulating economy. Capitalism had evolved a very costly ideology which uselessly aggravated and prolonged the crisis of 1929.

Despite some minor neoliberal relapses recently, this phase of history has ended.

Agriculture: In the Grips of the Malthusian Vice

The grandiose and patently absurd idea of establishing a centralized economy over an area of 22 million km^2 was implemented by Stalin in 1929. Industrial planning and collectivization were simultaneously pursued. Collectivization was to allow for the financing of industry and was to fulfill the requirements of primitive accumulation described by Marx in *Capital.* It was dogma that the peasants must be expropriated. Only large agricultural conglomerates would allow for the transfer of profits from land to industrial investment. The Russian Communists decided that average-sized farms in the hands of the peasants were incapable of technological progress and could not produce the surplus needed to promote industrial development. Marx's error was understandable. He himself was witness to only one example of modern economic development, that of Great Britain. The Russian Communists' error betrays gross ignorance and an extraordinary lack of common sense. France, Japan, Germany, and Sweden, in contrast to Great Britain, did not industrialize by liquidating their peasants. The contemporary condition of Soviet agriculture demonstrates that middle-sized, privately owned farms are more productive and better able to adapt to change than the kolkhoz. In any case, this is the opinion of contemporary Polish economists and sociologists.

Unlike industrial planning, the collectivization of agriculture suffered an immediate check. Peasants in the USSR preferred to slaughter their animals rather than submit themselves to collective organizations. Communists interpreted this phenomenon as representing typically regressive attitudes. In the light of future events, it

can be seen as an indication of political maturity. The peasants had instinctively foreseen the consequences of what was happening.

The price of agricultural produce in the USSR is fixed in an arbitrary manner at a very low level. In this way, the state deducts its rent on land. This setup necessarily induces a stagnation in production. All incentives are removed. The centralized nature of agricultural production—such and such a kolkhoz must produce such and such a product—immediately created catastrophic results. The classic example of the 1930s involved a kolkhoz earmarked for the production of cotton. However, in failing to include wheat famine resulted. Ignorance of local conditions on the part of the central organization is generally responsible for the disasters. In theory, each kolkhoz elects a manager; in fact, he is appointed by the administration and reflects the authority of the state.

What happens in such an organization is well known. The stock of animals has significantly dropped. Personal care for each animal, which is crucial, is lacking. Compared to the West, grain production has been *markedly* inferior since 1930. Plots privately owned by individuals are ten times as productive as lands held in common.

Let us for a moment leave aside how the kolkhoz is organized on paper—e.g., a cooperative enterprise, elected managers, etc.—and describe the system in concrete terms.

A large field is cultivated by farming families for the benefit of the state. These families essentially subsist on what they can grow on their allotted individual plots. This system is not unprecedented. It existed in the Western Europe of the ninth century, in the Carolingian Empire. It is the original feudal system. Peasants subsisting on their individual portions of land were made to cultivate domains of the emperor, the king, the count, or the feudal lord. Thanks to these individually owned plots of land, agrarian feudalism was infinitely more productive than the simple, servile work on the great landholdings. Beginning in the thirteenth century, Western Europe adopted a more sophisticated mode of production. The former system was slowly but progressively replaced by salaried work and privately owned farms. It is important to realize that the labor of serfs or slaves is relatively unproductive.

Since the Second World War, the USSR's population has increased faster than foodstuffs. Today, we are witness to a classic Malthusian problem. For its food, the USSR is at the mercy of the United States, Canada, with other Western countries to be shortly included. This

marks the end of the independence and economic self-sufficiency of the Communist system. This dependence on foodstuffs can be considered a permanent structural "given." If the Soviet population continues to grow, this dependence will deepen.

This situation also affects the Soviet Union internally. The movement of people from the countryside to the city is foreclosed. The stagnation of agriculture makes it impossible to redirect the labor force toward industry. Henceforth, industrial progress can be achieved only by increasing productivity and no longer by increasing the number of factories or workers. Intensive growth must replace extensive growth. Yet, because of certain social and organizational reasons, a centralized economy is incapable of sustained intensive growth.

An Overabundance of Planning

The sluggishness that marks a centralized economy, beyond a primitive level of development, appears to be natural, obvious, and inevitable. What is difficult to explain is how this system could ever be considered ideal and permanent. The lack of common sense on the part of Stalinist economists remains a curious historical phenomenon. How is it possible for a central organization to coordinate the activity of 250 million Soviet inhabitants, distributed over 22 million km², by arbitrarily fixing prices and wages? The establishment of an infrastructure poses relatively few problems. Industrial goods, highways, railroads, locomotives, electrical power systems are by nature collective undertakings, and are therefore easily controlled. When it comes to consumer goods, authoritative control cannot be reconciled to the ever-fluctuating demand. Black markets immediately spring up to distribute articles of consumption. This situation is created by the almost complete absence of such goods. In 1976, throughout the USSR, the majority of real "quality" goods were obtained in the black market, e.g., coffee, vinegar, and shoes. However, their quality has to be seen to be believed! At any rate, there exists a stream which circulates quality shoes and is parallel to what is officially marketed. Such items go directly from factories to managers and store employees, and never appear in the store windows. Eventually, these shoes can be seen on the feet of Soviet officials. The centralized system which sets prices and wages is

affected by this parallel market. The political police cannot hide the fact that the Soviet economy is far from being fully controlled by the state.

The Real World and the Study of Economics

Western economists and geographers of the Soviet system are often rather tedious and dry. Their heavy discourses on the theory of the organization of the Soviet economy and the five-year plans are based on patently fanciful statistics.

The problems which arise from centralization of the Soviet economy are well analyzed by Western economists, but academic precautions hinder an understanding of the *extent* of certain phenomena. A brief look at daily life in a provincial Russian city would give a better view of the current state of the Soviet economy than the detailed breakdown of official statistics. Most evident is the immense disorder of Soviet planning. Almost every Westerner familiar with *provincial Russian cities* speak in less academic terms: *it is utter chaos.*

Economic analysts, who are concerned with the theoretical problems of centralized planning, often, despite themselves, magnify the accomplishments of the Soviet Union. They are oblivious to the fact that, *practically speaking,* the Soviet economy is barely functioning. The extent of economic disorder must be experienced. In other words, economic texts, whether they are pro- or anticommunist, no longer describe the actual economy of the USSR. With social systems in crisis, economic analysis often loses contact with what is really happening. This occurred in bourgeois economic analyses of the capitalist system between 1870 and 1930. Their problem was to confirm the viability of the market mechanism in large-scale economies. In Communist countries today, the problem is different. The breakdown of production is not inherently explosive, as it is with the capitalist crises of overproduction. It is present, and can be empirically confirmed—but creeps up gradually and unnoticeably.

Our perception of the present strength of the Soviet system owes much to its policy of forbidding Western economists travel in the Russian provinces, the zones where disorganization is most manifest. Model factories and the textbooks published in Moscow are

used as the empirical and theoretical basis of Western economic analyses of the Soviet system.[24] Economists from certain People's Democracies, such as Hungary, have the opportunity (so to speak) to know the truth about Communist economics firsthand and to analyze it accurately.

Soviet economic science is, to a certain extent, modeled on updated theories first proposed by Kantorovitch, the 1975 Nobel prize winner in economics. The real state of the economy is, perhaps, better reflected as the constant butt of jokes:

"One day each Moscovite will have his own helicopter!"

"To do what?"

"To go look for shoes in Kiev, if there are any there."

Because of the inherent looniness of a centralized economy, the best analyses of the Communist economy are often suffused with humor. The widespread irrationality of an economic mechanism that scorns the laws of supply and demand produces an incredible amount of bizarre situations.

Often a good analysis of Communist economics can be recognized by its humor. Peter Wiles's remarkable book fits this category.[25]

When we are told that Soviet production increases by X percent per year, what is referred to? Pairs of shoes, or shoes only for the left foot?

Unwieldy statistics like the GNP are not even very useful for the analysis of growth in Western economies. Because there is no rational pricing system in the Soviet Union, nor any way to determine the true quality of goods, applying such statistics to the USSR is folly. Plumbing fixtures, showers, and faucets explode the very day they are installed. Waiters loiter in empty dining halls, when, at another time, confronted with a crowd of customers they seem to almost instantaneously disappear. Trains continue to be late, while railroad personnel dicker over the price of tickets with passengers, all at the expense of the state. Who can quantify things like this?

Centralized planning has not merely created inconveniences: it has led to massive and widespread disorder, which is fundamental to the economic system.

In 1973, official statistics proudly proclaimed that the real income of the Soviet worker had increased 8.8 times since 1913.[26] Unaffected by this fact, housewives in Moscow, Novossibirsk, and elsewhere still form long lines in front of stores and buy in the black market.

Since 1913, industrial production has increased 113 times. Yet, the USSR continues to export raw materials and wooden trinkets made by their artisans.[27]

It is a surprising revelation to find that after forty years of planning and a remarkable *official* rate of growth, the USSR is, in fact, an enormous pocket of underdevelopment with a standard of living recalling preindustrial times. This remarkable slowdown of the Soviet economy, and the trade between East and West which emerged from it, has made us aware of the increasing backwardness of the Communist world and has destroyed the myth of the economic success of Communism. Yet again, the capacity for lying and dissimulation on the part of totalitarians has been underestimated. How many gave any credence at all to the extermination camps of Hitler before the invasion of Germany in 1945? Or to Stalin's concentration camps and extermination camps before the revelations of the Congress? In 1976, who believes in the existence of such camps in China? Liberal naiveté in regard to Soviet statistics is less pronounced, but it is still real and issues from the same penchant toward credulity.

The nonfunctioning of the Soviet economy is fully explained in Peter Wiles's book. But in 1962, that author had not yet dared to question all the official claims regarding the performance of the Soviet economy.

Hungarian economists more and more make use of the provocative but apt concept of "quasi-development" in order to describe the fanciful economic growth proclaimed for the majority of Communist countries between 1945 and 1970. The concept of quasi-development is better than that of *extensive economic growth,* which is simply capital accumulation accompanied by a minimum of technological progress. *Quasi-development* implies that products are of poor quality or are absolutely useless.

The Two Sectors of the Communist Economy

Obviously, it is difficult to construct models of mechanisms that are theoretically under central control but in practice operate in complete disorder. There is need for a *general theory of the operation of the black market* that shows this feature of the Soviet econ-

omy to be no longer a marginal spinoff of a system which, on the whole, is functioning well. Rather, it must be understood as central, essential, and becoming more and more dominant. The black market is not a by-product of the economic system; it is fully one-half of it. In the future, Soviet-style economies must be thought of as systems with two sectors.

The role of the second sector in Communist economies can be deduced, defined, and situated in the whole picture.

The activities that they cover are principally those which require little or no capital and require no division of labor. Those who can perform certain skills and services obviously fit into this category. The parallel economic activities performed by certain citizens of the Soviet Union involve work that one can do alone or with a small number of people. A small amount of material is involved, often stolen from state factories. Simple handicrafts, medical services, plumbing, and record-player repair form the major part of goods and services furnished by the free sector. To this must be added produce grown on the privately-owned plots in the kolkhoz.

The amount of activity in the free sector essentially depends on the level of take-home pay from state industries. Net income is obviously related to wage rates. It also tends to be a good indicator of the amount of goods and services produced by the state sector. The lowering of net income implies a proliferation of parallel activity, as it becomes more profitable for workers to apply their energy in the free sector than to work in the state factories. This relative profitability of self-employment explains the lack of productivity involved in piece work in the Communist system, where the wage rate is so low. It is better for a worker to devote his time to handicrafts and to trade what he has produced for what is sold by those in the kolkhoz than to wear himself out frantically producing vast numbers of pieces, each of which is paid at a ridiculously low rate. The free sector is above all evident in areas expressly short-changed by Gosplan.* What first comes to mind are medical services and the sector of the economy involved in the distribution of goods, where wages are less than 35 percent of the average industrial wage.

Natural laws denied by Marxist economists (the law of supply and demand) come into play in the interstices of Soviet society *as they*

*Gosplan—the central authority supervising the USSR's planned economy. It formulates the specific plans for implementing the long-run economic objectives of the party. —Trans.

did in precapitalist systems. What is unique and fundamental to capitalism is its reticence to oppose these natural mechanisms, except when they provoke crises of overproduction. The mode of production in feudal times, for example, responded to the influences of natural fluctuation in rent, wage, and price, which tended to undermine a system that based the value of things on custom.[28]

When the workings of these natural mechanisms were fully accepted and encouraged, capitalism was born. It has survived some of its most deadly consequences, such as the crises of overproduction, thanks to the intervention of the state. Currently, the dynamism of Western economies comes from the equilibrium established between the two sectors, state and free. These two sectors exist in the USSR, but the free sector is confined to the activities of artisans, which does not add significantly to a country's productive powers. The consequence of this situation is a lowering of the total gross productivity of the Soviet economy.

In the Communist system, there is only one solution to avoid the flight of the work force to the free sector: coercion. This was the Stalinist solution. In an atmosphere of police terror, wages tied to piece work provided a real incentive because the level of pay was unrivaled by privately produced handicrafts. Wages tied to piece work were effectively applied to everything under Stalin. Its importance, however, progressively dwindled under Khrushchev. The reduction of the role of the police during de-Stalinization removed the incentive to piece work. The low wage rate encouraged the flight of labor toward the free sector. Khrushchev's response was to raise the net level of salaries. But the natural market mechanisms still remain the best way to establish harmony in the workings of the whole economic machine, even where state planning is absolute.

A certain number of phenomena which, at first glance, appear somewhat curious in planned economies can be explained by the operation of this second sector, the free sector of the economy.

First, inflation is no longer unintelligible if the existence of a sector where prices are freely established is acknowledged. In the USSR today, the rate of inflation is primarily influenced by what takes place in the agricultural sector. Agricultural difficulties produce a rise in the prices of produce sold freely and privately by those in the kolkhoz, despite the fact that, in theory, these prices are set under certain ceilings. In turn, all other scarce items in the system are sold at inflated prices which produces either a swelling of the artisan's

sector, or, by compensation, a rise in official wages. And so it spirals. The free sector acts upon the state sector and often even as its driving force.

These periodic inflationary pressures explain why, contrary to proclamations and official indices, *the standard of living in the Soviet Union has improved very little since the war.* The prices in the black or free market have increased, absorbing (or provoking) the rise in gross income. This is why the life-style of Soviet citizens, as has been described to us by certain Westerners who have had the opportunity to become familiar with provincial Russian cities, has changed so little in twenty years.

Why a Consumer Society Is Unacceptable

One effect of the black market is to establish independent prices for all products whose official prices are arbitrarily fixed by the state and do not correspond at all to a product's real value. The black market thrives in almost all systems where prices are fixed in an authoritarian manner. In the USSR, the fictions that surround centralized planning are perpetuated because collective goods are easily controlled and proportionately quite numerous—armaments, highways, railroads. However, the phenomenon of "parallel pricing" infects even railway tickets, since in all "socialist" countries there is always dickering over prices with ticket collectors. The amount of individual consumer goods is relatively small. The USSR is not a world of transistors, gadgets, televisions, bluejeans, and automobiles. Consider that every advance in the production of consumable goods in the USSR encourages the parallel or free black market sector. *The Soviet system cannot take the path of a consumer society because this would automatically encourage the growth of the free sector at the expense of the centralized sector.* Since Stalin's death, the Soviet leaders are hesitant to encourage mass consumption. It is generally admitted that they are loathe to allow an economic decentralization that would undermine the foundations of their power and violate a rigidly accepted tenet of their thinking. But a modest growth of consumer goods, given *the centralized economic machinery,* would also destroy the current economic system. The black market sector, which is subject to market mechanisms, would proliferate as new individual consumer goods are produced. Very

likely, this is what happened under Khrushchev, who truly tried to develop a certain measure of private consumption. His successors have balked at this orientation. It is essential to understand that raising the standard of living of the masses is impossible in the context of the present Soviet economic system.

Increasing decentralization would, in and of itself, lead to political awareness. Consumer culture develops from the market and is completely incompatible with a totalitarian system. Whatever is said on the Left, a consumer society is above all concerned with liberty, or a certain freedom of choice. Despite advertising and monopolies, consumerism encourages diversification in Western societies. Everyone consumes, but a given individual is concerned with certain kinds of goods. One wants an auto, another a stereo system, another a motor bike, and still others books and clothes. Different activities are associated with these different objects. A highly developed consumer society is more and more individualized; *everyone does his own thing.* We readily perceive that this saying is more compatible with a "developed liberal society" than with the "dictatorship of the proletariat," a totalitarian political system under the sway of a single party. Why limit the choice to a single party, if there is freedom to choose among different life-styles? Communist ideology contains phrases like "the Communist man" or "the Socialist man." It is quite true that the mediocre standard of living in the Soviet Union assures a certain uniformity in the style of life of the exploited classes. For every worker in the Soviet Union, to consume means to frantically search for sugar, vinegar, oil, fruit, or a shirt. In the Soviet Union, it can't be said that consumption is a mode of self-expression. Rather, consumption means eating poorly, clothing oneself inadequately, and finding any kind of shelter. A consumer society will never come to be in the context of the present-day Soviet social system because mass consumption contains the germ of free choice, which is, admittedly, a powerful attraction.

Moreover, it is generally known that a rise in the *standard of living* in a backward society destabilizes traditional mentalities, as *the level of aspiration* of individuals outstrips accustomed life-styles. Revolutions tend to take place during the initial phases of advancement. If the Soviet oligarchy wants to keep its power intact in the short run, it has an abiding interest in keeping Soviet consumption at its present level. It is more and more committed to doing. It can be

congratulated for its clairvoyance. Its military budget furnishes it with the ideal pretext.

In the West there is a "leftist" school of thought that sees the will of the consumer completely manipulated by the marketplace. Attempts are made to prove that consumers are mere objects, at the hands of dastardly capitalists. Advertising and more general brainwashing are held responsible for the supposed passivity of the consumer. An analysis of the consumer in Communist countries would shed considerable light on their contentions. *In theory,* the consumer there has absolutely no sway, at least up until certain rather recent economic reforms that have taken place outside of the USSR. The situation in Hungary, for example, would furnish a reference point for what is experienced in the West. Here is a country where the *goal* of the system and the ideal espoused by propaganda is underconsumption, as opposed to the overconsumption that exists in capitalist systems. Yet, in the complete absence of advertising, we find in Hungary the same obsession with the automobile and televisions.

Economists who are genuinely familiar with Eastern European countries do not mistake them for those described in the *Economic Textbooks* published in Moscow. They do not utter such nonsense about the role of consumers.

European leftists have much to learn from the failures (and successes?) of Communist economic systems. Hungarian economists are in the process of settling accounts with Marx. They have seen the failure of the Marxist economic system.

Two kinds of individual goods most characteristic of a consumer society are televisions and automobiles. They deserve special analysis.

In the Soviet system, television is the exception to the rule. The regime is not hostile to them. On the contrary, the television set may represent an individual consumer good, but the service that it renders and its programming are perfectly centralized. Television extends control of information and culture. The spread of television, a fixture of consumer societies, is by and large controlled by the regime. In the USSR, the number of sets has increased very rapidly. In this country, which lacks sufficient numbers of shoes, 59 percent of families in cities had a television set in 1963, apparently at least in the region of Sverdlovsk. Only 22 percent of rural families had a

set. This difference reflects the inequality in the standard of living between city and countryside.[29]

The automobile is viewed quite differently from television. Widespread use of it would be intolerable for the system. Totalitarianism cannot accept an increase in the free mobility of individuals. The Soviet dictatorship reveals itself by the manner in which it compartimentalizes its territory and segments society. The automobile makes all kinds of contacts possible, and above all allows for dissidents to move about without police supervision and control. Presently, when it is authorized, travel takes place by train or by plane. The offices of the KGB, set up in every railroad station and airport, allow for a sufficiently precise tracking of an individual's movement. The KGB would be mired in work if the number of automobiles were allowed to increase significantly. The USSR has set up a few Fiat and Renault factories to begin production immediately. The apparatchiki may be furnished with quality cars, but no efforts are made to stimulate mass production. There is unassailable proof of this. The USSR produces about 4.5 cars for 1000 inhabitants (France—60 per 1000). Even so, it still exports a part of its production. This policy is much to the consternation of the Fiat executives who were relying on the size of the Soviet market to forestall competition, at least in the short run. The apparatchiki are taken care of, while domestic consumption is neglected.

For a Westerner suffering from air pollution and traffic jams, it is hard to realize that the automobile is a sign of freedom and a guarantee of liberty, and even of social dissolution, when one considers custom-made "getaway cars." Once the automobile is in the reach of the masses, it poses a particular problem for police in the USSR and elsewhere.

Telephones in the Soviet Union are not produced in great quantities. The spread of the telephone would interfere with the policy which segments geographical areas.

In 1976, an enormous portion of national revenue was still devoted to arms production and the armed forces. This very high percentage is *necessary to prevent the transfer of productive forces to the consumer sector. Arms expenses* serve, among other things, *to maintain the preeminence of the centralized sector of the economy.* Military appropriations at the expense of consumption is not a necessary evil. Even if the Soviet leaders could, they would not

want to simultaneously increase individual consumption and military potential. An increase in the production of consumer goods would undermine the centralized nature of the economy.

That the Soviet Union has chosen to spend heavily for military hardware is not merely motivated by political reasons. It is in part dictated by the logic of the economic system, which depends on central planning (i.e., strict control) and thus must only produce goods which are *held in common and impossible to consume individually.* Armaments is not the only dynamic sector of Soviet industry. All individually *nonconsumable* goods are given priority. This includes such things as ores and petroleum, of which there are *surpluses* that can be exploited. Industries such as the merchant marine are also favored.

In the USSR, the present mode of centralized planning makes it impossible for the economic system to produce anything but nonconsumable goods. The irrationality of the Communist mode of production (the "socialist" mode of production, in the strict Marxist sense) makes present-day Western capitalism appear a model of perfection, despite the crisis it is experiencing.

The Class Struggle and the Productivity of Labor

Soviet leaders are clearly uninterested in encouraging mass consumption, as this would swell that sector of the economy that cannot be controlled, destroy the myths surrounding centralization, and disrupt the machinery of power. But even if they really did want to simultaneously produce military hardware and individual consumer goods, they could not do it. The productivity of Soviet industry is ludicrously low. This colossal machine works slowly and to no avail. There is a cause and effect relationship between these things, as will be seen. Soviet industry stagnates because it serves no purpose.

Soviet industry's general lack of productivity has two related components. Both men and machines are unproductive. Given the same amount of capital and the same technology, the productivity of labor in the USSR is one-half or one-fourth of that in the West. Capitalist firms that set up factories in the USSR "ready for production" recommend ways in which labor can be effectively organized. Yet, the managers in the Soviet Union must systematically *double, triple, or*

quadruple the work force in order to attain an average level of productivity.[30]

In the Soviet Union, the low level of worker productivity (the productivity of labor) is a perfectly normal occurence, masterfully analyzed by Karl Marx when addressing himself to a former period of history. Slave labor is not very productive. Workers in Communist countries do not have the status of free workers. Besides having the legal obligation to work, they are bossed in an incredibly authoritarian manner. The Communist system shares several features with the ancient slave system.

On October 23, 1975, a new regulation was adopted in Poland. It declared that 25 percent of the worker's annual salary would be withheld *"if a worker voluntarily left his place of employment; missed a single day of work through his own fault; or blatantly manifested an incapacity to work by reason of alcoholic abuse or from having participated in a fight."*[31] Is there a French fascist who would dare propose a similar law? The expression "dictatorship of the proletariat" begins to take on some meaning. This rule was adopted in one of the two Communist countries (Poland, Hungary) with the most independent working class. It is not difficult to imagine regulations which apply in the Soviet Union.

The absolutely autocratic manner in which the factory is run, scorn for the worker and indifference to working conditions, produce a high level of absenteeism and low productivity. Each day in Poland, seven percent of those salaried in the socialized sector of the economy fail to show up for work.[32]

I grant that absenteeism and low productivity are made possible by guaranteed employment. Slaves in ancient times were also not threatened with loss of employment.

Communism opposes the development of individual responsibility and initiative, the efficacy of which had been discovered by nascent capitalistic societies, the Puritan workers in America, England, and elsewhere. The economic cost of this opposition is very great for the Eastern European regimes. The knee-jerk response of Communists is to attribute the low productivity of labor and high absenteeism in the USSR to guaranteed employment. This explanation is not only chimerical, it is bourgeois. Full employment in capitalist countries after the Second World War did not prevent French, German, American, and Swedish workers from working. Why would full employment have no effect or even a positive effect on the "alienated" workers

in the West and a negative effect on the proletarian "dictators" in the Soviet world? To think that the proletariat will act only in the presence of negative sanctions is a bourgeois attitude of long standing, current in Western capitalist countries twenty or thirty years ago. If they are threatened, they will work. No longer threatened, they act like undisciplined children and do nothing. The Communists think like the old anti-Keynesian bourgeoisie from the prewar era who steadfastly adhered to the belief that only the threat of unemployment would compel the masses work.

The attitude of agricultural and industrial workers in the Soviet Union toward work is readily understandable and entirely reasonable. Since 1960, they have been working more without a corresponding improvement in their standard of living. The availability of foodstuffs has probably not increased and lodging has hardly improved. There still can be found whole families occupying a single room. In fact, the only progress has been the regime's decree allocating one television per family. It is easy to see why the Soviets are discouraged. They now know by experience that every increase in their productivity—and production generally—supports armament appropriations and keeps the privileged class furnished with the latest gadgetry, such as the Tupolov supersonic transport (a Concord for everyone) and automobiles. Khrushchev sincerely sought to increase the level of consumption of ordinary households. And the Soviets probably believed him when he told them they were finally going to receive the fruits of an industrial society, which was so difficult to bring about. Advantages granted to the inhabitants of the kolkhoz (the inflated price of grain, and the size of the individual landholding) immediately caused significant increases in agricultural production. But those times are over. The workers and farmers in the Soviet Union now know they will not receive an adequate return for their work, as Western workers do. This is why productivity either stagnates or decreases in the USSR, as Nikolai Baibakov, president of the State Planning Committee, recently admitted. His reports suggested that productivity would increase if wages were raised and the standard of living improved. It remains to be seen whether his suggestions will be adopted. There is taking place now an intensification of coercive measures. Work regulations are becoming more and more harsh. The Soviet Union is trapped in a viscious circle. As their condition progressively worsens, workers become more and more

disenchanted with their work. Absenteeism soars, which in turn unleashes new forms of repression.

The Low Level of Labor's Productivity: The Natural Outgrowth of the Class Struggle in a Totalitarian Regime

There are two countries in Eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia and Poland, which also have serious problems with worker productivity. These are the two satellites where the legitimacy of the regime is most questioned by the people. Husak is considered an out and out "collaborator"; Gierek has yet to achieve acceptance for the Polish Communist Party. In all of Eastern Europe, the Polish Communist Party has enjoyed the least success. It is unnecessary to adopt special criteria in order to understand the low rate of Soviet productivity. Its causes are more diffuse inasmuch as it is not influenced by an anti-Russian national sentiment. In the USSR as elsewhere, the low level of productivity measures the alienation of the worker better than any abstract theorizing on the ownership of the means of production.

The methods of the Soviet rulers to increase productivity are noteworthy for their lack of success, as well as for other reasons. For example, in great industrial conglomerates, there is a system of collective responsibility. If a city reaches the goals of the plan, it is placed in a category earmarked for better provisioning. Generally, this means the appearance of a new kind of sausage in the stores. Similarly, the city can fall short; in which case the sausage will disappear from the displays. There is a certain medieval charm to this system. It brings to mind the king of France addressing himself to his *good cities*.... But does this really affect productivity?

The servile condition of the proletariat in Communist countries has had certain long-term economic consequences, the most important being technological stagnation. Workers in Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union have no way to defend themselves (e.g., through unions, or the right to strike) and consequently cannot make their grievances known. A freeze on wages nullifies the effect of the latest technology and an increase in the productivity of machines.

In the West, periodic salary increases have a positive effect on

technology. A rise in wages encourages each enterprise to replace manual labor with a more efficient machine. To reduce the number of workers and augment the productivity of machines are necessities for every capitalist firm. The enterprise that fails to effect this is subject to immediate financial reverses. In each capitalist country, the disappearance of a marginally productive enterprise causes the overall productivity of the economy to increase.

There are no mechanisms that automatically spur the development of technology in Communist countries. Wages are frozen and exert no pressure on the complex of industries. Firms are not held responsible for their final profit or loss. They are not threatened with extinction by low productivity. This is perhaps not true of Yugoslavia, where the economic system increasingly differs from the Communist norm.

This does not mean that an increase in productivity is impossible in Communist countries. But each advance in productivity must be the result of a deliberate effort, on the part of the regime. In Communist economies, there is an *inherent tendency toward technological dormancy.* This is due to the fact that enterprises are not responsible and because wages exert no pressure. In the capitalist system, on the other hand, there is an *inherent tendency toward technological progress,* since a firm that does not modernize will be superseded.

The relative dynamism (which is somewhat exaggerated) of Soviet industry between 1935 and 1955 was caused by Stalin and his police, who represented an outside force promoting productivity and innovation by acting *upon the economic apparatus.* The purges, which struck high officials and industrial managers, were a lively incentive to productivity and efficiency. The purge of high officials and the terror that operated upon workers served as a substitute for the profit motive. The desire for profit was replaced by the desire for life itself. Stalinist Russia knew how to use political sadism in order to stimulate growth. The Soviet people paid very dearly in human life for this particular kind of economic system. The disappearance of terror immediately brought about a lessening in the rate of growth because it did away with responsibility.

Since 1945, the growth in Communist economies has been extensive in nature. The number of workers has been multiplied, and a proportionate increase in the number of machines has taken place. Technological advance has had very little effect on industrial devel-

opment. However, the surplus rural population has recently been depleted. Without adequate preparation, it has suddenly become necessary to pass on to a new level of intensive development by introducing new procedures and productive methods. But technology has suffered such long-term retardation in Communist countries that it cannot effect this transformation alone. This is why the USSR and the People's Democracies solicit the West for modern factories which can be assembled for immediate production. Karl Marx again shows us that this kind of technological stagnation is characteristic of all slave systems where manual labor costs nearly nothing. The ancient world witnessed much scientific progress without any concomitant technological progress because of the existence of an inexhaustable slave market.

Industrial Productivity and Military Power

How does Sputnik, Vostok, and Soyez fit into this understanding of the systematic stagnation of Soviet industrial technology? As Sakharov explained, Russian space and military technology may be very visible, but it does not represent the peak of an immense technological iceberg. Underneath, there is nothing. Soviet technology is more like those fake villages consisting merely of a street lined with facades that Potemkin presented to his mistress, Catherine II of Russia. Soviet society and its educational institutions vaunt their scientific bent, but their science has only been narrowly applied. All the energies of Soviet research have been concentrated in the military and space fields, which has produced A-bombs and H-bombs, rockets, tanks, satellites, remote control devices and tracking equipment, artillery and light arms, and advances in aviation. Soviet military prowess has for a long time caused us to overestimate the technological development of the USSR and has lent to this large, poor country an appearance that exaggerates its modernity. China, followed by India, has showed us that the A-bomb is within reach of all technologies. It is now known that a very poor society on the path of development can produce A-bombs. The USSR achieved this sooner but by more brutal measures, by suppressing the level of consumption of its nonprivileged citizens.

The low productivity of the economy makes the Soviet military effort all the more onerous. Officially, military appropriations make

up 12.5 percent of the budget, or a little less than 7 percent of the country's revenue. For the moment, let us consider these numbers accurate. Without getting mired in questions of the reliability of official Soviet data regarding their gross national product, we must grant that the industrial productivity in the USSR is roughly a third of that in the United States. The latter devotes 6 percent of their federal revenue to military spending. We could conclude from these figures that the USSR produces one-half the amount of armament as its American rival, that real military parity does not exist between the USSR and the United States. With its level of productivity equal to one-third the level of American productivity, the USSR would have to spend about 20 percent of its national revenue to attain this parity. This is why the Soviets, despite increasing levels of military spending, are willing to try to limit the arms race.

But whatever the real percentage of the GNP devoted to defense spending, the USSR has difficulty maintaining military parity. It does not have an unlimited stockpile of arms at its disposal. Moreover, the West has probably underestimated the importance of the failure of the USSR to supply its allies in the Third World with tanks, missiles, and material. Soviet failures were often interpreted as intentional on the part of the Soviet Union because of certain political disputes. Often the reverse was true. Supplies were not forthcoming because of the failure of Soviet production, which in turn led to a chill in the relations between the Kremlin and its allies.

Arms production is the chief element which keeps the Soviet economy functioning. These nonconsumable goods pose no threat to centralization. They are the only export of relative technological sophistication that the Soviets can offer.

But arms production, which to all appearances is a dynamic sector of the economy, enervates the economy as a whole and is the main cause for low productivity.

The reasons for this rather lackluster assessment of the Soviet economy can be summarized: 1) Centralism is incompatible with economic diversification; 2) Low productivity is due to the slavist character of labor. The Communist system employs slave labor in the cities and feudal-like arrangements in the countryside, typified by the individually owned plots of land there.

There are slaves in the factories, and serfs in the fields. The slavemasters and lords are replaced by the state. Manual labor is collectively owned, as are the means of production. The whole labor

force is brought under the bureaucratic shadow. On the whole, the organization of society is reminiscent not so much of feudalism or ancient Greece, but rather of a mode of production that predominated in Asia. This system was characterized by a state bureaucracy that levied a rent on land and agricultural communities that were ignorant of private property. These taxes were used for great construction projects or for war. Marx had elaborated this idea of a distinct Asian mode of production to describe the social systems of China and ancient India. As Wittfogel has demonstrated, the Soviet model with its denial of private property and its strong, exploitative state, comes excruciatingly close to this idea.[33] Discussions of this "Asian" mode of production raise a furor in the Communist camp and first arose in a strictly modern setting in regard to agricultural collectivization and the five-year plans. Quite quickly, this idea was condemned as Trotskyite. Stalin soon put a damper on debate by forbidding discussion of the idea.

Generally, *Eastern European economists and sociologists are passionately interested in all regressive modes of production.* The study of slavery, feudalism, the Asian mode of production, and general historical inquiry at least allow indirect treatment of the problems that necessarily face Soviet-style economies. The Soviet mode of production, an updated variant of the Asian mode of production, tends toward inertia. Its original goal to transform and modernize is lost in the red tape of centralism, which further encumbers an unproductive and primitive working force. At some length, Raymond Aron in *Democracy and Totalitarianism* analyzes Karl Wittfogel's thesis on the profoundly similar nature of oriental despotism (or the Asian mode of production) and the Soviet system. Aron posed the following question, which goes to the heart of the matter.

"Asian despotisms that were known in history were linked to economically static societies. Can the same phenomena be reproduced and endure for any length of time in an industrially progressive society?" Aron raised this question in 1965. Ten years later we have a response. The Communist mode of production, just like the Asian mode of production, tends toward stagnation. The bureaucratic machine proves itself stronger than technological progress. The superstructure paralyzes the economic and technological infrastructure. It should not be forgotten that the Asian modes of production also had an initial active phase before lapsing into stagnation. This phase

is reflected in programs of large-scale construction, great walls and ramparts, and irrigation systems. The economic and military infrastructures envisioned by Stalin, namely dams, electrical power plants, heavy industry, and the Red Army, have an earlier counterpart.

This paralysis is in the process of spreading to all strata and sectors of the Soviet economic system. Workers flag in their work and officials are more and more tempted by corruption. For the moment, the only method of redress that has occurred to the government is repression. Capital punishment for economic offenses (there were seven official cases in 1975) is certainly an indication of apprehension. Perhaps it also indicates an attempt to return to the "rationality" that existed in Stalin's economic system.

How To Quantify Disorder

The leveling off of national revenues in the USSR requires some doing inasmuch as each year about 25 percent of the gross national product is earmarked for investments, which normally should increase production. However, the Soviet Union presents us with the surprising spectacle of an economy which yearly increases its capital stock and yet without being able to increase its real GNP.

In the capitalist system, the rate of economic growth generally parallels the rate of investment. If one increases, so does the other. For example, between 1967 and 1972, Japan annually reserved 38 percent of its GNP for investment and realized an astonishing rate of growth, more than 10 percent. France, which had a more modest rate of investment (about 26 percent), attained a rate of growth of 5.9 percent, which is really not that bad. Italy, where the rate of investment had fallen to less than 20 percent, achieved a 4.3 percent rate of growth. In the West, when the number and efficiency of machines increases, production also increases.

This simple econometric is not applicable to the USSR, where the number of machines increases but production does not. (The efficiency of machinery improves very little because of technological stagnation.) Thus, it is impossible for a Communist economy to pull off the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

In Communist economic systems, disorder reigns as resources are fruitlessly invested. This has two principal causes:

1) *Bureaucratic folly.* Many of the machines produced are faulty. Others work well but are not shipped where they can be used. The organizational vices of the Soviet economy lead to substantial waste. What is invested is effectually neutralized by the centralized nature of the economy. *The efficiency of the Soviet administration must be seen as varying considerably at different times and in different circumstances.* A relaxation of political terror almost automatically leads to a bureaucratic paralysis, which in turn leads to further "losses on the return of investments." The effect of this variable is multiplied by a constant, the overall size of the centralized economy. The larger a country is, the more problems centralized planning brings. But to be valid as a constant, the country's size must in fact be constant. In 1945, the USSR annexed some territories which formerly belonged to Poland—the Baltic Republics and a portion of Moldavia. This certainly increased the effect of this factor considerably. Therefore, the constant for current Soviet territory must include the 1945 annexations. The size of the country serves to multiply the affects of bureaucratic torpor.

2) *The workers' passive resistance.* A lowering of labor's productivity balances out an increase in the stock of machinery. If with more and more machines the workers are less and less efficient, productivity is going to decrease in proportion to investment. Passive resistance on the part of the worker can vary considerably. By passive resistance, I mean a lowering of worker productivity combined with an increasing incidence of thievery of state property in the factories. Productivity is also a function of the amount of political terror. Restraining police repression will engender a decrease in the level of productivity. Moreover, workers know that every increase in productivity will eventually be absorbed by armaments expenditures. They are a dispirited group whose only incentive is to lower productivity.

Bureaucratic Folly and Passive Resistance: The Workers' General Disorder

The contradiction between the high rate of investment and a nugatory rate of growth can be used to measure the "degree of general disorder," an idea essential to the analysis of centralized economies.

In the USSR, the rate of growth is at a standstill while the rate of investment remains high. It can be immediately deduced from this that the degree of bureaucratic and worker dysfunction is increasing.

The concept of the degree of disorder allows us to distinguish between two exemplars of Communist economic stagnation, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. According to capitalist criteria, what Czechoslovakia experienced during the 1960s was "normal" in that the lowering and eventual standstill of the rate of economic growth corresponded to a lowering of the rate of investment. Gross investments were at an incredibly low level in 1966, about 12 percent. In this situation, what economic indices tell us corresponds with what we would expect, or very nearly so. The rate of growth was nil because the rate of investment was only able to compensate for capital replenishment. Debts were funded without real investments taking place. There are not any very serious discrepancies involving the economic variables in Czechoslovakia during the 1960s. The relation between growth and investment is very nearly similar to that in the West. In econometric terms, roughly the same productive factors apply. "Roughly" because the technological standstill in Eastern European countries implies less return on capital investment. Even in Czechoslovakia, to attain a level of X growth, a rate of investment greater than what would be necessary in the West would be required. The Czech stagnation was not caused by an *increasing* functional disorder. There is nothing surprising about an economy which does not grow when it fails to invest. A society can stagnate without there being systematic disorder.

The Soviet model differs markedly. In the Soviet Union is found a low rate of return for capital investment characteristic of all Communist countries. It can be seen in the small advances made in technology and the low productivity of the workers. But we can also see here a low rate of growth accompanied by a consistently high level of investment.

In the USSR, a high degree of functional disorder is the source of the discrepancy between rate of investment and rate of growth. A low rate of worker productivity combined with administrative shortcomings is exacerbated by the size of the Soviet Union. In coming years, the proportion between rate of investment and rate of growth must be followed with interest, if not passionate concern. It can

teach us more than all the public opinion polls put together about the tendency of Soviet society toward decomposition, the workers' state of mind, and the bureaucratic mentality in the USSR.*

*The relation between rate of investment and rate of growth in capitalist countries is not absolutely uniform and linear. Experience shows that, on the average, the relation is of the following kind:

Rate of growth = A + 0.3 X Rate of Investment, where A is a constant. This formula shows that if the rate of investment increases 3 points, the national product will increase 1. This is on the average. Certain capitalist countries depart from this formula significantly. In certain cases, the growth of the GNP is greater than the rate of investment would lead us to believe. In other cases, the inverse holds: the GNP grows less than expected. The difference between the theoretical rate of growth (deduced from the formula) and real growth, for a given rate of investment, measures the relative efficiency of investment in a country. There is no basic difference between this measure of the relative efficiency of investment (which depends on organization, the rapidity of technological progress, etc.) and the measure of the degree of dysfunction in Communist countries, which is, in fact, a measurement of the relative inefficiency of investment. If there is no basic difference, there still is, however, a difference of degree. Irrationality does not mark the character of capitalist economies, which tend to produce equal numbers of shoes for the left and right foot. The concept is the same, but it must be radicalized to be applied to Communist economies which team with functional disorder almost by the nature of things.

Chapter 4

THE SATELLITES TAKE OFF

At this stage of the analysis, it would be somewhat tempting to condemn Communism, without reservations, for economic inefficiency and for the exploitation of the proletariat. Unfortunately, for the USSR, the situation is not so simple. In its zone of influence, there are *economically dynamic* Communist regimes. The ideological pressure that they bring to bear is the principal threat (immediate) to the stability of the Soviet system. Certain economic successes of the People's Democracies are proceeding to undermine the system and ideology of the Soviet Union.

The rate of growth in some People's Democracies is clearly greater than that in the Soviet Union. Growth is greater in Rumania and Bulgaria, as extensive recovery is underway. Predictions for 1977 show that the difference in growth rates between the Soviet Union and their satellites is going to narrow, as the USSR dissipates the advantages that come from having industrialized earlier. In the future, it will no longer be a question of satellites catching up. Moreover, because the People's Democracies are infinitely more open, and their statistics are more verifiable and less inflated than those of the Soviet Union, what really separates them is even less than appears.

The Depressed Standard of Living in the Soviet Union

The standard of living in a Communist country cannot be assessed by merely calculating the gross national product or the per capita

The Greater Growth of the People's Democracies

Countries	Population (in millions of inhabitants)	Official Rate of Growth (latest statistics: 1973–74, in percent)
USSR	252	Official 5 Real 0
Poland	33.5	10
Rumania	21	14
GDR	17	6.3
Czechoslovakia	14.5	Forecast 6
Hungary	10.5	9
Bulgaria	8.5	9

gross national product. Investments and military appropriations must be subtracted from the GNP. Appropriations for "national defense" in the Soviet Union are particularly high. The citizens of People's Democracies, without this expense, are relatively better off than the Russians. Yet, they are repressed by a military power in a way unparalleled among Western countries.

After this subtraction, black market revenue, drawn from the underground sector of the economy, must be added to the Gross National Product of a Communist country. Unfortunately, these figures never appear among official statistics.

In failing to take this second economic sector into account, errors are made in all attempts to calculate the standard of living of a given Communist country. These errors are compounded when trying to compare the various standards of living in different Communist countries. The amount of activity in this second sector is extremely variable. It depends upon government tolerance and the people's spirit of enterprise.

For example, let's compare Hungary and the USSR. Hungary, the showcase of the socialist camp, is teeming with automobiles and foodstuffs. Yet, rather mysteriously, it appears in Comecon's statistics as entirely undistinguished from other People's Democracies. Conversely, the USSR is rich in numbers and grandiose percentages. In fact, when compared with Hungarians, Soviet inhabitants appear as if they come from an underdeveloped country.

The bewildered look of young Russian Communists (Komsomols) gaping at store windows and peering into the automobiles of Buda-

pest typifies the mentality of a person from an underdeveloped country in the process of discovering civilization.

To see with one's own eyes the style of life in the Soviet Union and in its satellites would go much further than official statistics in revealing the different standards of living. Examples abound. In the People's Democracies, the automobile is common, as is toilet paper, and, above all, an adequate food supply. The USSR contrasts sharply with its satellites in these respects. The automobile remains the privilege of an apparatchik; lining up in front of food stores is a systematic undertaking. Those who claim the Soviets consider *Pravda* of little value state a bold-faced lie, as it is used copiously in the public toilets.

It goes against the grain of Western economists to systematically integrate the second, semi-clandestine sector of Communist economies into their models, and to deflate Soviet statistics more than those of People's Democracies. But without this, any evaluation and comparison of the relative levels of development is impossible.

In the statistics of the Eastern European countries, a crucial fact is obscured. The USSR's satellites more and more resemble Western Europe of the 1950s, when a consumer society was in the process of developing. But certain characteristic features of Communist poli-

Two Ways of Classifying Communist Societies According to Standard of Living

(standard of living as per capita gross national product and as the *visible* wealth of the inhabitants, *estimated by obvious economic rules of thumb*)

Countries	Per Capita GNP (1974) In Dollars	Corresponding Rank	Visible Wealth (1975) Estimated Rank
USSR	2,300	4	7
GDR	3,430	1	1
Hungary	2,140	5	3
Czechoslovakia	3,220	2	2
Poland	2,450	3	4
Bulgaria	1,770	6	6
Rumania	*	*	5

*Rumania does not publish statistics on per capita GNP.

tics and economics remain, long lines, an agricultural deficit, a housing crisis, and the absence of privately owned automobiles.

Comparing different standards of living by mere observation is very approximate as there is no single, linear model for the development of a consumer society. Certain peoples are better measured by the number of automobiles (an index useful in France, Italy, and Hungary); others are better measured by the housing situation (the Nordic countries).

However, certain statistics show that the USSR is steadily falling behind its satellites. In 1967, agricultural productivity of the People's Democracies was already 2½ times that of the Soviet Union. The use of chemical fertilizer also indicates the relative backwardness of the USSR. The rapid growth (perhaps "normal" is a better word) in agricultural production, the traditional weak point of Communist economies, shows that the People's Democracies have entered decisively on the path of development.[34] The level of their agricultural production is now comparable to that of Western European countries.

The statistics revealing the distribution of the employable population in the broad sectors of the economy shows us much. There is a downward trend as far as people employed in the agricultural sector of the majority of the People's Democracies is concerned. This statistic has remained unchanged in the Soviet Union.

From this simple fact, we can conclude that real growth in the Soviet Union has already fallen to zero percent, while that of the People's Democracies continues to follow a normal pattern.

If the most recent official statistics are deflated and if the second (clandestine and free) sector, which is defined by weak and limited productivity, is taken into account, once more it is shown that the present level of growth in the Soviet Union is, at most, zero percent; that of the People's Democracies can be put at five percent on the average.* The satellites are progressing at about the same rate as

*Services and artisan work have, by definition, a constant productivity since they practically do not require any capital at all and are almost pure work. Taking it for granted that the *volume of activity of the free sector* is nearly constant, since repression is constant, and the official wage rate does not upset the equilibrium: its overall rate of growth is null.We have the following relation:

$$\text{Rate of real growth} = \frac{\text{Official growth of } \textit{national wealth}}{\text{Official national wealth in the primary sector} + \text{Constant wealth of the invisible sector}}$$

Adding the invisible sector to the denominator obviously causes the rate of real growth to decrease.

the European Economic Community (EEC) countries in the 1950s. In contrast, the USSR is ensconced in stagnation.

The First Explanation of This Growth: The Small Size of the People's Democracies

Centralization does not have the same dramatic consequences for every Communist system. It only paralyzes the large states.

It is obvious that centralized planning has very different consequences in the USSR (250 million inhabitants) and in Bulgaria (8.5 million inhabitants).

A small country like Bulgaria or Hungary is not really much more difficult to manage in a centralized way than an enormous capitalist enterprise. The Bulgarian and Hungarian industrial complex each employs only about twice as many workers as General Motors.

The USSR is in no way comparable to General Motors. Beyond a certain size, which is difficult to delineate, centralism contributes to functional disorder. It is impossible to fix a size limit or define its

Bureaucratic Enterprises: A Scale

	Number on Salary
Western Firms 1974	
General Electric	404,000
ITT	409,000
Philips	412,000
Ford Motors	404,000
General Motors	734,000
Industry in People's Democracies (1966–70)	
Bulgaria	1,100,000
Hungary	1,650,000
Rumania	2,030,000
Czechoslovakia	2,550,000
Poland	3,880,000
Soviet Industry	31,500,000

(based on 30% of the active population)

optimum dimensions. Poland, the largest of the People's Democracies, shares with the USSR its taste for administrative reform. People's Democracies of a lesser size spare themselves these periodic reforms of their administrative machinery. Because they are smaller than the USSR, People's Democracies suffer less from economic centralization. The historic decentralization or Balkanization of Eastern Europe seems to have been fortuitous for their Communist economies.

The Second Explanation of Growth: The Liquidation of the Marxist Economy

The People's Democracies are not going to rely merely on the advantages of their small size to overcome the inconveniences of a centrally administrated economy. Two of them, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, have already undertaken a sweeping economic reform making management responsible for industrial concerns and leaving them great liberty to fix prices and wages. In about 1965, Czech and Hungarian economists, together with their governments, realized that ignoring certain basic economic laws had resulted in stagnation. The progressive abandonment of centralized planning is the major aim of these reforms.

Hungarian and Czech enterprises, if Husak does not retreat from all that was gained in the Prague spring, will be able to deal more and more freely with other satellite countries and with the West. Initially, the partial freeing of prices and wages from control unleashed a wave of inflation in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, just as happened in Yugoslavia. But considerable progress can be expected from these economic reforms, which will bring in their wake the flexibility typical of Western economies. Through control over the budget and credit mechanisms, the state retains overall economic control, while a large measure of autonomy is left to individual enterprises.

The People's Democracies also violate certain Soviet dogmas in the agricultural sphere. Poland has completely decollectivized agriculture. Hungary has first decollectivized then recollectivized in an intelligent manner, by enlisting kulaks (rich peasants) and reorganizing cooperatives. What heresy! Kadar's regime has been skillful in using the natural leaders of rural communities, while collectivization

under Stalin liquidated them and antagonized the entire peasantry. Contemporary People's Democracies tend to be pragmatic. Everything should be tried, despite dogmas. The present concrete situation is what matters. Realism triumphs.

Economic Policy during the Stalinist Era

Between 1948 and 1953, the petty Stalins in Eastern Europe came to power behind the tanks of the Soviet army. By and large, they implemented a Stalinist program of agricultural collectivization and centralized planning, which gave preeminence to industry, froze wages, and invested heavily. On top of this, the cold war severed all economic relations between the People's Democracies and Western Europe. The Soviet Union freely pillaged the raw materials and newly acquired industrial goods of the satellites. At the same time, Stalin forbad his satraps to participate in the Marshall Plan and transplanted entire factories from Eastern Europe to the USSR. This "economic policy" nevertheless brought about certain positive results associated with Stalinism. It transformed a basically agrarian country into a semi-industrial nation, which emphasized heavy industry and produced no nonmilitary consumer goods. Only Czechoslovakia suffered immediately from the excess of centralization and the rupture of commercial relations with Western companies who supplied them with modern technology. In 1938, Czechoslovakia was economically competitive with France. In 1960, like France, it would have evolved diversified industry, improved its technology, and developed the rudiments of a consumer society, all based on a decentralized economic system utilizing the latest machines from Western countries. But in 1963, the Czechoslovakian rate of growth fell to zero.

Stalinist Czechoslovakia multiplied its factories and encouraged the flight of unskilled labor from the countryside to the cities but could not achieve an intensive growth to increase overall productivity.

In the rural areas of Eastern Europe, collectivization had the same disastrous results as in the Soviet Union. The characteristic *irrationality* that marked the Soviet leaders of an older generation can be seen there. From the time they came to power, they hastened to commit the same blunders as the "inspired" Stalin. The German,

Polish, and Hungarian Communist parties suddenly found themselves facing massive agricultural problems. Heretofore, agricultural production was sufficient to support some exportation. But the same thing happened there that happened in the Soviet Union. A high official of the GDR, a firmly convinced Communist and a former member of the international brigade who participated in the French resistance, exclaimed in front of French visitors in 1960: "We never imagined we would have problems with potatoes."

At first, each small-time Stalin had tried (and succeeded) to transform his country into a mini-Soviet Union. A policy favoring heavy industry, the liquidation of the kulaks, and agricultural collectivization was undertaken despite local factors and the presence or absence of raw materials necessary for industrialization—coal, iron, petroleum.

However, intolerable social pressures rapidly built up because wages were maintained at subsistence levels and because of the complete scarcity of foodstuffs. Workers' demands, coupled with an anti-Russian national sentiment, caused serious problems for the German (1953), Hungarian (1956), and Polish (1956) Communist parties. In Czechoslovakia, a serious questioning of the system was sublimated until some time later. In this traditionally pro-Russian country, the working class undertook reform only at the last moment, in 1968, and then only to do an about-face when Russian tanks entered the scene. Rumania and Bulgaria, two of the most "primitive" countries economically, have not been witness to an outbreak of problems on a large scale. The USSR and its puppet regimes have not been able to maintain the Eastern European economic systems in the face of active popular opposition. They have had to make concessions. The USSR has shown more restraint in its pillaging of the People's Democracies. Trade among socialist countries is more and more based on world market prices. In short, the absolutely one-sided nature of trade relations between the USSR and Eastern Europe has been abandoned.

More importantly, Moscow began to allow the People's Democracies to reform their economic systems if they so desired. This had little immediate impact on the basic orientation of each satellite country. The Polish Communist Party relapsed slightly into economic Stalinism, which led to the riots of 1970. On the whole, each of the People's Democracies increasingly followed its own path. Pragmatism began to dominate the policies of the Communist par-

ties in satellite countries. The only theoretical and practical demands made by the USSR now are: 1) maintaining the dictatorship of the Communist party; and 2) maintaining the Warsaw Pact.

Clearly, Moscow has relaxed its grip on the People's Democracies, and it is because of the vigor and courage with which the people in the satellite countries have defended themselves.

The reforms implemented by the various satellite countries are quite different. Rumania remains perfectly orthodox, Poland and Bulgaria a little less so, and the GDR inconspicuously combines Communist dogma with certain progressive twists. By far Czechoslovakia and Hungary are the two countries most advanced toward freeing prices and wages from central control. Yugoslavia is a case apart, since it is politically independent. But despite its nationality problem, it remains a model for all the People's Democracies. The Yugoslavian policy of worker control of industry brought about the radical decentralization of the economy. Though this has been disastrous in practice, it provides a tempting model for countries that do not have Yugoslavia's serious nationality problems.

Not all the People's Democracies have attained a level of development which calls for radical decentralization, a policy which partially or completely frees wages and prices from control. But each will decentralize, when it appears necessary.[35] It could be argued that the difficulties confronting the Yugoslavian economy derive from having decentralized too soon, before having attained sufficient development of its infrastructures and consumer goods.

The People's Democracies are far from being out of the woods. They appear rich in 1976, but only by comparison to the USSR. Their backwardness in comparison to Western Europe is still overwhelming. These developing countries have been adversely affected by the economic crisis of the West, because they can no longer import the same amount of machinery and consumer goods. The majority of them have problems arising out of their trade deficit, though there is nothing in their deficits more serious than what the French face with their balance of payments.[36] When reason does finally prevail with Communist leaders regarding their agricultural policies, centralization, wage and price control, and collectivization, structural constraints will be eradicated. *Private ownership* of the means of production is no more necessary to a developing economy than *collective ownership.* We must divest ourselves of these two Marxist conceptions whose practical relevance is nonexistent. Nei-

ther *collective ownership* or *private ownership* of the means of production guarantees the end of economic exploitation. More important for liberating men is political liberty, the right to organize and strike.

Why Decentralization in the USSR Is Impossible

Soviet leaders have refused to introduce radical economic reform into the USSR, the country in most need of it. Since Liberman's first article comparing the productivity of certain industries, there has been much lively debate; but in 1976, the establishment of even relative decontrol over prices and salaries is not taken seriously. A type of socialism responsive to supply and demand is looked upon with horror by the Soviet leaders.[37]

The planners tried to moderate the effects of increasing economic disorder by certain organizational mechanisms, the use of computors, for example, which do not bear on the principle of centralization. In 1965, the need for reform led to efforts at rationalizing the management of certain enterprises, but planning itself remained intact.

A majority of Soviet economists like to think that reforms like those undertaken in Hungary would be sufficient, but the causes of Soviet economic stagnation have deeper origins which lie in politics and the Kremlin.

In Communist countries, decontrol of wages and prices has generally caused a rise in inflation, with certain privileged castes, managers and bureaucrats, reaping financial benefits. In the long run, reform produces a rise in the general standard of living. The spirit of enterprise and the profit motive of Communist managers would result in enriching their workers. These "liberalized" or "liberated" social mechanisms are very similar to those operating under capitalism. Yet, a reform like that in Hungary or in Czechoslovakia initially leads to a rise in inflation and an increase in social inequalities, bringing no immediate improvement to the well-being of the majority. In fact, it makes them worse off.

The dismantling of a centralized economic system almost automatically precipitates destabilization and widespread popular dissatisfaction. Czechoslovakia, in spite of this, continued with eco-

nomic reform. Hungary was free to choose from any number of economic models. Because their citizens were opposed to the regime in any case, they did not have to take into account the short-term impact of their policies. The basis of Communist power in the satellite countries lies neither in popular acceptance or even in the police. It lies in the Soviet army.

Brezhnev does not have the same freedom of action as Kadar. He cannot deal with his people with the same casualness. To grant the absurd character of the economic organization, to suddenly abandon sixty-year-old dogmas, and to stimulate a sudden rise in inflation would risk jostling the Soviet people from their passivity and habits. The political system could not accommodate itself to the sudden application of the type of economic reform which occurred in Hungary. Unlike the other Communist parties in Central Europe, the Kremlin works "without a net." If economic reform plummets and political agitation ensues, there is no brother country of the USSR which will *"reestablish socialism,"* as happened in Prague in 1968.

Holding the Empire Together

The abandonment of centralized planning would also put into motion centrifugal forces affecting both the political and economic systems in the non-Russian republics of the federation—the Ukraine, the Baltic countries, the republics in the Caucasia and Central Asia. The Communist world has already given us two examples of *embryonic national movements induced by economic decentralization.*

1) The Yugoslavian version of industrial democracy, which entails the autonomy of certain enterprises, rapidly led to sharpened differences in the standard of living among the many federated republics which make up the country—Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia, etc.

2) Certain centrifugal tendencies were immediately perceived in the Soviet Union followingKhrushchev'seconomic reforms. In 1957, the sovnarkhozes were created, which were organizations to implement planning on a regional level and to allow for a certain amount of managerial autonomy. They immediately became preoccupied with matters of local interest at the expense of any national objec-

tives. They were suppressed shortly after Khrushchev's ouster in 1964.

This first attempt at decentralization was extremely modest when compared to the Hungarian reform which overturned its entire economic organization and reintroduced, in part, market control over prices and wages. Nevertheless it still quickly led to differing rates of growth between Russia and the other federated republics. Between 1958 and 1965, growth was much more marked in Kazakhstan, Kirghiz, Belorussia, Estonia, and Latvia than in Russia. The centralization of the economy is essential to the maintenance of the Russian empire. The re-centralization that followedKhrushchev'sfall was not simple reflex on the part of the Moscovite bureaucracy, frightened by the growing independence of local bureaucrats. With over 50 percent non-Russians, the USSR cannot entertain the alluring dream of a decentralized economy.

The likely consequences of a Hungarian-style reform on the Soviet system could be divided into three phases. In the short run, inflation and popular discontent would be ignited. After that, centrifugal forces would be let loose in the peripheral republics. In the long run, a consumer society would result, with diversification in taste and aspirations, and general liberalizing consequences.

In the short term, it appears that the rigidity of the economic structures is necessary for the stability of the Soviet political system. Its injustice is flagrant. History is hard for the men in the Kremlin. They cannot undertake effective economic reform, because they must be ever cognizant of political reactions within Russia and among the non-Russian people of the Federation. The presence of the Red Army within the People's Democracies frees their leaders from these bleak prospects. Not every People's Democracy has undertaken the same reforms. But all could if they so desired. If economic reforms in any way challenge the preeminent power of the Communist party, all they have to do is appeal to the Soviet army in order to assure political stability. But even without such reforms, the People's Democracies will always have an advantage over the USSR because of their small size, which proportionately reduces the inconveniences of centralized control.

The People's Democracies will remain for a long time less developed than the West. But in comparison to the USSR they are already rich. The economic gap between the satellites and the Soviet Union is going to widen considerably in years to come.

How Being Satellites Affects the Nature of "Communist" Consumer Societies

The Soviet Union lacks the power to impose its economic system on its satellites. It cannot prevent their advance and transformation into consumer societies. For example, Hungary already resembles France more than the USSR, most especially the France of the 1950s. Like people in East Germany, the Magyar people have come to know the automobile, television, and other consumer goods. The type of consumer society in Hungary and East Germany is *normal* insofar as various kinds of goods are not discriminated against. *Contrary to their Soviet counterparts,* the workers of Budapest and East Berlin have the right, and increasingly the opportunity, to own their own car and move freely about their countries. The East German regime is entirely fascist in its temperament. The Hungarian regime is the most liberal in all of Eastern Europe. Yet these two regimes, while poles apart, are similar insofar as they do not fear any reprisals from their own population, at least in the short run. This is because the Soviet army is camped on their territories. These regimes intend to assure their long-term survival by satisfying the material aspirations of their inhabitants. Driving about in their little Trabands, East Germans can be met traveling throughout Central Europe and the Balkans. The Hungarians are not exactly impressed with these automobiles, which they have dubbed "cardboard cars," but they buy them nevertheless when they can't get their hands on a Fiat. Telephone communication is unrestricted in all the satellites. Poland is even linked up with the West *by telephone.* Hungary, the GDR, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia will be next. But this will never come to pass in the USSR. Honecker, Gierek, and Kadar are relying more on the ominous presence of the Russian army than on control over the communication network and the mobility of its population in order to assure the stability of their regimes. Poor Brezhnev can rely only on his own forces, on his own repressive apparatus.

Paradoxically, the Soviet empire contains a rich periphery, while its center, with respect to its standard of living, remains underdeveloped. It is even more astonishing to know that this difference between the center and the periphery in the Soviet empire repeats itself in the interior of the USSR, where the non-Russian federated republics are clearly more prosperous than Russia, which nevertheless dominates them politically.

Stalinist Myths

In order to maintain the unity of its empire, the Kremlin has had to make some important concessions to those provinces inherited from the tsarist era. What follows is a joke that is now circulating around Russia.

A pre-Watergate Nixon has a brief chat with Brezhnev.

Nixon: Tell me, how are the Russians doing now?

Brezhnev: Oh, very well. For example, take Armenia. Everybody has their own car, house, garden, and television.

Nixon: But the Russians, how are the Russians doing?

Brezhnev: In Georgia, for example, everybody has his own car, house. . . .

Nixon: But the Russians?

Brezhnev: Quite well. And in Azerbaijan everyone has his own house and car.

Nixon: The RUSSIANS, what about RUSSIA?

Brezhnev (put off): Do I ask you how the Blacks are doing in America?

The preservation of empire and the satisfaction of national pride takes a heavy toll on the Russian's standard of living. The Russians are becoming the laughingstock of the Soviet Union. For an inhabitant of Caucasia or the Baltic countries, they represent dull Spartan types, who are badly exploited. In comparison to Russia, the peripheral republics are prospering and enjoy a comfortable standard of living. There, *the automobile is conspicuous.* In Tbilisi, the birthplace of Stalin and the capital of Georgia, there are more individually owned vehicles than in Moscow, the "privileged" capital of the Soviet state.

Especially in the republics of the Caucasian mountains, the police are not very effective. Russian dissidents often seek refuge in the mountain farms and monasteries of the region.[38] In Georgia, we find again the necessary link between the automobile and freedom.

Regions in the south of the Soviet Union, Moldavia, the Caucasian republics, and southern Ukraine, have virtually decollectivized agriculture. The peasants who inhabit the Black Sea coast freely sell the produce from their orchards in Russia. The spirit of enterprise is proverbial there. They even go so far as to ship their fruits by air in order to sell them in Moscow's markets.

Like the satellite countries of central Europe, the various nationali-

ties of the Soviet Union are in large measure subject to *Communist myths.*

However, there are important differences between the satellites, which lie *outside* the Soviet Union, and the nationalities, which lie inside. In the Baltic, Moslem, and Caucasian countries the central power is still struggling for economic and cultural control. Meanwhile, attempts to economically and culturally Russianize Germany, Poland, and Hungary have been abandoned.

Most of the economic crimes that receive capital punishment are in the Caucasian republics. In Azerbaijan recently, five people were put to death and forty-nine imprisoned on charges of corruption. This affair involved all of Georgia.

Everyone knows that the black market and political bribery are *commonplace* in the Soviet Union. However, the scandals in the Caucasian republics, which receive extensive coverage in the Soviet newspapers, must be seen as *more than mere instances of economic corruption.* In each of these extortion cases, the local leaders of the Communist party and a large part of the government bureaucracy were implicated. Jacques Amalric, the *Le Monde* correspondant in Moscow, reports that the most recent scandal required a whole network of lies and the concerted efforts of local politicians. He was justified in concluding that *corruption is rife in the system.*[39] In the outer lying regions of the Soviet Union, such things reflect centrifugal political pressures at work and a *national* conspiracy to defraud the Soviet state. The five men executed apparently were Azerbaijanians, if their names are any indication.

The outer lying republics are quite separate from the more centrally located republics, nor are they replicas of the People's Democracies.

The "internal" and "external" satellites do share some common traits, though. In both places, Russophobia has brought about an intellectually healthy atmosphere. The People's Democracies are militarily controlled, while the outer lying republics are controlled through the police. In central Europe, it is the Red Army which guarantees the political domination of the Soviet state. In the Baltic, Caucasian, and Moslem countries, that domination is ensured by the KGB. Yet, the activity of the KGB in central Europe must not be underestimated, nor the intimidating role of the Soviet army in the outer lying republics. Bear in mind that the most recent Soviet military maneuvers took place in the Caucasian region.

The main difference between the "internal" and "external" satellites lies in the degree of economic control. Countries like the GDR, Poland, Hungary, and even Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Bulgaria are in the process of de-Stalinizing economically. This is mainly evident through a rise in their standards of living, which generally reflects an increase of the GNP.

In contrast, profit in any sector of the Stalinist economic system is reinvested in military expenditures, and, as a result of the unendurable worker exploitation, the various sectors are characterized by low productivity. The Socialist Federated Republic of Russia is quintessentially a Stalinist economy. The outer lying republics are at least partially liberated. The standard of living is higher than in Russia and agriculture often has been decollectivized in fact, if not by law. Yet, the central power still wages a struggle to appropriate at least a part of locally produced surplus value. The constant "economic" trials in the outer lying republics bear witness to this fact. Unlike agriculture, local industries in large part remain under the control of the central state. But fraud against the state in these areas has reached record proportions.

The non-Russian federated republics find themselves in an intermediary position between Russia and the People's Democracies, at least in relation to the central power of the Soviet Union. They are less subjected than Russia, but more controlled than the People's Democracies.

Nevertheless, the heart of the Soviet system is the Russian Republic, with its badly exploited and brutalized people. In this central area, the regime grants no economic or ideological concessions. The solidarity of the whole system rests on the passivity and nationalism of the Russian people, who finance the country's military program and bear the brunt of the absolute inefficiency of a pure Communist economy. To maintain its present state of equilibrium, the Soviet system exhausts the heart of the country.

The Cyclical Character of Politics and the Economic Expansion of the Satellites

The progress of the People's Democracies toward liberalism—or more simply, toward liberty—is completely thwarted by the USSR. François Fejto emphasizes the cyclical character of the political his-

tory of Eastern Europe since 1945.[40] Whether or not the Soviets resort to tanks, a hardening of policy is sure to follow a period of liberalization. Yet, the economic history of the satellite countries stands in marked contrast to their political history. Economic expansion is "linear" and promises to be even more accelerated in the future. Central Europe as a whole constitutes a vast but decentralized Communist economy. Its people are either in the process of establishing or are on the verge of establishing a consumer society, under the dictatorship (of the proletariat?).

While theoretically the dominant power, Russia is both politically and economically paralyzed. Its period of liberalization was very short-lived under Khrushchev, in both political and economic areas. Russia has completely reverted to Stalinism. Since this reversion, the Soviet economy has once again become integrated in the political and social system, at the same time becoming mired in stagnation.

The same motor moves history, even in Communist countries. What Marx would call the class struggle and popular dissatisfaction are active in the mounting pressures for change in the GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. The illegitimate elites installed by the Soviets in these countries after the war have known, since the uprisings of the 1950s, the Prague Spring, and the Polish riots of 1970, that only an increase in the standard of living can rally the masses to the side of Communist regimes. Mass rejection of Stalinist economics is a social-political constant, which demonstrates the irresistible pressure in the "People's" Democracies to move toward economic empiricism and the material betterment of the masses. On the other hand, the stagnation of the USSR's economic system is principally caused by the passivity of the Russian people. Communism can adapt itself to popular demands, as Western capitalism was pressured to do. Beginning in 1945, but after a great many struggles, Western countries saw wages rise.

Jean-François Revel writes:

> If the capitalist system, from a purely economic point of view, does not promote social interests, it is also not exclusively anti-social. The capitalist system is above all motivated by increasing production. It can be fully understood in economic terms. It is moved by certain "determinisms" and economic ends, which are neutral from a moral point of view. Nevertheless, it can bring about justice to a greater or lesser degree. It must not be thought that it only functions by bringing

about more and more injustice. This is the orthodox way of looking at it, at least from a Marxist view of history, and a core belief of that philosophy.[41]

What has just been stated concerning capitalism can be equally applied to Communism, understood in economic terms as the collective ownership of the means of production. If the Communist system, from a purely economic point of view, does not promote social interests, it is not exclusively antisocial.

It is clear that the Soviet version of Communism serves no social interests. There, the collective ownership of the means of production furthers exploitation and depresses the standard of living for the sake of military programs.

The recent experience in Hungary shows that Communism is not inherently antisocial. If the collective ownership of the means of production is reconciled with a certain amount of wage and price flexibility, material betterment of the country as well as its workers can be achieved.

How can a nonsocial form of capitalism change to a social form? By being responsive to popular will. How can a nonsocial form of Communism be changed into a social form? By being responsive to popular will.

In other words, the modes of production described by Marx are neutral from a social point of view. Neither private property nor collective ownership of the means of production automatically results in injustice or social justice.

This is why, to a certan degree, Hungary resembles France, and the USSR resembles Iran. It is not Communism or capitalism per sé which is fundamental to the character of a regime. Rather, the social forms of capitalism and Communism must be distinguished from the nonsocial forms of these alternatives.

Both the capitalist and Communist systems need a fundamental technical adjustment to become socially responsive, or simply efficient, and capable of sustaining growth. Capitalism must accept the state's regulation of the economy to sustain consumptive capacities. Communism must accept a less rigid centralized planning and a certain amount of wage and price flexibility. Capitalism must take a step toward centralization, and Communism a step toward decentralization. A socialized market place is the Communist equivalent of the Keynesian revolution.

The Communist countries of Central Europe have an advantage

over the more advanced Western bourgeois countries insofar as the instruments of repression are available to them. The Soviet army serves to control their popular disruptions over the short run, so that they may find their way patiently, by trial and error, so to speak.

Popular discontent and the reassuring presence of the Soviet army encourages the satellite leaders to undertake economic experiments. The small size of their country is a further advantage in this regard. The elements of this situation are not subject to change. They clearly show that the gap in the standard of living between Russia and her satellites will progressively increase. The country which dominates is poor, and the dominated nations are at least potentially rich. Though this situation certainly appears absurd, it follows logically from the reality of things.

To recapitulate, all the factors that foster change in the People's Democracies prohibit it in the USSR. The enormous size of the country paralyzes the functioning of the centralized economy. Yet decentralization is impossible because of the existence of irreducible ethnic minorities, who would exploit the situation to win first their economic, then their ultimate independence. The Kremlin has no outside repressive force at its disposal. This is the role played by the Soviet army in the GDR, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Everything which favors her satellite countries condemns Russia. Everything which encourages economic expansion in the People's Democracies mires the USSR in stagnation.

This tendency toward the economic breakup of the Soviet sphere is clearly revealed only when these geographic and socio-political constants are taken into account. Econometric models that neglect these factors and base themselves on the grossly inaccurate official statistics are flawed.[42] The old debated question concerning the possible convergence of the West with the Communist system can, today, be given a slightly different formulation. The People's Democracies are converging with the West. The USSR is entrenched in underdevelopment. The People's Democracies will one day be "industrial societies," while the USSR remains an historical monstrosity.

The End of Petty Nationalism?

For the moment, we are speaking only of tendencies. Eastern Europe, Central Europe, and the Balkans are not yet homogeneous.

Economic and cultural diversity there is still much greater than in Western Europe. Relatively speaking, certain of these countries are already rich, such as the GDR, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Others are still quite poor, such as Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria. Moreover, the People's Democracies are the heirs of age-old conflicts which have torn them apart. The Czechs are not particularly fond of the Germans, the Poles, or the Hungarians. The Poles do not like the Germans, nor do they have any affection for the Czechs. Hungary, which, with Germany, was an aggressor in the last war, saw the peace treaty drastically reduce her territory. The existence of Hungarian-speaking minorities in Czechoslovakia and, above all, in Rumania, is met with a certain rancor in Hungary. Ceaucescu's Stalinist brand of nationalism makes life difficult for the Hungarian minorities that live in Transylvania. But beyond the historical hatreds in Eastern Europe, there are several old friendships, that between Poland and Hungary, for example.

Despite the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 by Soviet, German, Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian troops, a new found solidarity is beginning to appear, based on a common hostility to Russia. Rumania and Yugoslavia are already cooperating in arms manufacture. Although it could legitimately lay claim to certain territories, Hungary is one of the least "vengeful" countries of the region. Kadar and the Hungarian troops took part in the invasion of Czechoslovakia only in a symbolic way. They were required to occupy Bratislava, a former Hungarian city.

An increase in the standard of living in all the People's Democracies would likely eradicate national resentment. The phenomenon of denationalization, after all, took place in Western Europe. Material betterment of the population made them profoundly indifferent to questions of national prestige. Russian nationalism increasingly seems to be a symptom of underdevelopment. The change in the West has been quite rapid. Thirty years ago, Europeans were still killing themselves like complete barbarians. Now, they are bewildered at manifestations of newly felt nationalism in the Third World. If what is now a tendency finally leads to the development of consumer societies, an evolution similar to what took place in Western Europe can be expected. Naturally, Russophobia will outlive this change. To be completely indifferent to questions of prestige, a nation has to have regained its independence.

The Historical Mission of the People's Democracies

The history of the People's Democracies since the last war is depressing. Every attempt to liberalize has been blocked by the Soviet Union. The Eastern European "satellites" have been compensated for their loss of national independence with the freedom for certain social experiments, which are neither very glorious, or very original. It is sad to think of the many contributions nations like Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia have made to Western culture and the paucity of their contributions since the last war. The People's Democracies have had the misfortune to be satellized by a military power that is culturally retarded. But to be fair to them, these nations have succeeded in preserving a part of their cultural dynamism despite the Russians. In Czechoslovakia, the movies of Forman and the novels of Kundera have added to Western culture. This holds true for the Polish science fiction writer Lem. Their works have no relation whatsoever to Soviet culture. The refugees of Hungary have included a large contingent of eminent scholars. Nevertheless, Hungary still boasts economists, sociologists, and authors who are intelligent freethinkers.

Eastern Europe has not been cut off from history. It has not been condemned to historic oblivion, like dozens of monotonous underdeveloped countries. Despite themselves, the People's Democracies have discovered another definite and profoundly important historical role. They are the catalysts for the internal collapse of the Soviet system. The most important element in this breakdown is their rate of growth. Each leap forward by the satellites has a contrary effect on the USSR and exacerbates the system's internal tensions.

Within the Soviet sphere, ideological competition has begun. The role of intellectuals in the satellite countries in the approaching breakdown of the system is not negligible. The Hungarian economists are apparently leading the way. Taking refuge behind the theoretically infallible dictatorship of the proletariat, they are casting doubts on fundamental principles of the Marxist economy.

Istvan Friss, who seems to be the foremost economist in the Hungarian regime, wrote in 1968:

> Marx, Engels, and Lenin concluded from their analysis of capitalism that after the socialization of production . . . society would be capable of scientifically evaluating

its needs and how to satisfy them. It would also be able to rationally distribute production according to needs. . . . These ideas have not been justified by reality. Our society is not yet capable of assessing with any exactness our present or future social needs. It cannot effect the allocation of men and machines in the socially most beneficial way.[43]

This couldn't be better said.

Polish historians, economists, and rural sociologists are quite skilled in using high-sounding Marxist terms for what is actually historic and economic common sense. Reading between the lines, one quickly recognizes their efforts in disproving a large number of Marxist-Leninist hypotheses. This is even done by periodically citing from Marx, Engels, and Lenin themselves. They *delicately* suggest the regressive nature of the Communist mode of production and demonstrate the progressive character of the small peasant landholdings. It should be emphasized that Polish agriculture is almost totally decollectivized.[44] Although their language is not always conventional, and their treatment of subject matter somewhat haphazard, satellite countries have proposed common-sense programs that would perhaps be applicable to Soviet reform. The resulting works are veritable tours de force. They are destined to live on as tributes to intelligence, courage, and humor. Hungarian, Polish, and Czechoslovakian sociology is not like the fiction that passes for sociology in the Soviet Union. The "social science" method that identifies what is with what should be is peculiar to the USSR. Hungarian sociology, as it is presented in the collection of works published simultaneously in France and Hungary in 1959, describes a reality in comprehensible terms, devoid of the fanciful. It begins with concrete themes—issues of daily life, social stratification and mobility, and demographic matters. Andreas Hegedus, a man who renounced his former Stalinist stance, dares to speak of *the autocratic nature of Socialist society.*[45] The autocracy of the society must be understood in contrast to individual autocracy. We see here a bold attempt to make use of a concept drawn from orthodox Communist rhetoric to confront that orthodoxy itself.

Hungarian empirical studies describe real facts, which must be understood to be embarrassing and even shocking for the regime. In his study of the Hungarian countryside, Hegedus systematically reveals that 50 percent of rural villagers are prejudiced against gypsies, while 23 percent have antisemitic sentiments.[46] We are far from the complacent Leninist statements issuing from the Kremlin

about the absence of antisemitism in the USSR. If we were to believe Soviet statistics, we would think that 99.9 percent of the citizens of the Soviet Union are free from any racial prejudice, and that .01 percent are Israeli secret agents.

In an article from the same collection of works, Gyorgy Konrad and Ivan Szelenyi criticize the urban policy of the Hungarian government, which led to pronounced social segregation and the formation of slums in older urban sections.

Subsequently, these sociologists have had several run-ins with the regime, which have cost them their positions in the university but not their liberty. Nevertheless, their works have been published. What can account for Hungarian liberalism? Are the leaders of this country naturally more tolerant? Have they learned their lessons from the 1956 revolution? Perhaps, but this would be, at best, only a partial explanation. The fact of the matter is that within certain well-defined limits, the Hungarian regime can tolerate criticism, or at least begin to tolerate it. This is because, unlike their Soviet counterparts, they can boast of real progress. The Hungarian reality, which is the subject matter of their sociology, is not sordid like the Soviet reality. The daily life of the average Magyar does not consist of long waits in front of stores, alcoholism, police intimidation, and fear. The Hungarian reality has little to hide. The Budapest bureau of statistics, and similar agencies in the People's Democracies, publish fairly accurate statistics on consumer goods, homicide, suicide, and social mobility. These statistics are understood as depicting the imperfections of a way of life that is getting better. The "sociologist," or rather the "fiction sociologists" in the Soviet Union must content themselves with masking aKafkaeskand regressive way of life. In Eastern Europe as in Western Europe, liberty parallels material betterment. Material progress allows any system, whether it be capitalist or Communist, to tolerate criticism. In terms of its organization and standard of living, the USSR remains a polarized and impoverished preindustrial society. Its system cannot possibly tolerate a nonfictional sociology.

Hungarian sociology has both the *strengths* and *weaknesses* of Western European sociology. It inclines toward the empirical, but, in some cases, has a very continental character. By continental, I mean, not British, but French or German social science, which shows a penchant for verbosity inhereted from Hegel via Lukacs. Although very respectable, Lukacs is not the most impressive thinker that Hungary has produced in the twentieth century. This loosely ortho-

dox Marxist is well known. He serves as a focal point for Magyar cultural patriotism. The obscurity we find in Hungarian social science is not, on the whole, of Marxist-Leninist origin. In the previously referred-to collection, Marx and Engels are cited 17 percent of the time. At most, Lenin is cited three percent of the time and "other Soviets" are cited very infrequently, two percent. All in all, 22 percent of the work's citations are taken from what would be termed orthodox sources. Seventy-eight percent of the references are to other authors—Westerners, Hungarians, Poles, Czechs, or East Germans. Seventeen percent of the references to Marx-Engels is not surprising, if one considers the importance of these two thinkers in the history of sociology. Nor is three percent of the quotes referring to Lenin surprising. What is surprising is that only two percent of the quotes are drawn from other Soviet authors.

Enroll Georges Marchais in the University of Budapest!

Because Communism has failed to keep pace economically, its practical achievements do not warrant the recognition they receive. It is the immense theoretical revisions of the People's Democracies which are the real achievement.

Certain Russian economists have given fairly lucid explications of the problems of Communism, but certainly not publicly. It is in the satellite countries only that the process of doing away with a Marxist economic understanding is most advanced, especially as a matter of official policy. Hungarian and Polish Communists, and the Czechs before 1968, could educate Moscow. Even certain Western Marxists could learn from them. In particular, the French Left is not adequately conscious of the importance of these recent and fairly radical theoretical revisions made by the satellite Communist parties. For electoral purposes, the French Communist Party (PCF) finds the economic success of the People's Democracies sufficient. Perhaps it might also utilize, if not study for themselves, the doctrinal revisions that have made the economic advance of the GDR, Hungary, and Poland possible.

The economic texts of the PCF reject the theoretical achievements of the Hungarians, Poles, and Czechs. Czechoslovakian and Hungarian economists are conspicuously absent from Maurice Decaillot's

book, *Le mode de production socialiste (The Mode of Socialist Production),* which appeared in the Editions Sociales in 1973, and spoke of the latest Communist reflections on socialized economies.

The French Communist Party prefers Russian and East German economists, as a reading of the magazine *Economie et Polititique* demonstrates. The French Communists are particularly fascinated by East Germany, because this country has reconciled planning with efficiency. The disorder that ordinarily evolves out of centralized control of the productive forces is held in check by German discipline. Without becoming culturally "Germanized," it is difficult to see how the East German economic model could be applied to France.

The Italian Communists have understood this. Italy has always been an "offshoot" of Central Europe. It is still the main capitalist country with which Hungary and the other People's Democracies have commercial relations. The PCI's doctrinal revisions owe a great deal to Hungarian modes of analysis. The Italian Communists no longer demand nationalizations and authoritarian planning. Their social-democratic economy is sensible, because it relies on analyses and revisions worked out by Eastern European Communists. The PCI's revisionism (or what Leonid Brezhnev would call opportunism) is supported by the basic understanding of the impracticality of Soviet-style economies and societies. Mussolini's fascism has shown them that the radical intervention of the state into the private sphere is not necessarily a "leftist" principle. In contrast, the PCF has understood nothing of this. It is bereft of intellectuals and cut off from Eastern Europe by its chauvinism and cultural cocoon. The Communist satellite countries have nothing but scorn for the PCF and its attachment to Russia. They see the French Communists as vassals of Moscow.

The PCF, dogmatic in economic matters, has made certain political concessions. But the repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its criticism of repression in the USSR are only tactical devices without any profound significance.

Two Marxist Hypotheses: One True, the Other False

"The class struggle is the motor of history." This is often true. "Socializing the means of production does away with social classes." This is never true.

Communism in the USSR and in Eastern Europe shows that socializing the means of production does not guarantee the disappearance of classes. On the contrary, the Marxist theory of class struggle, whose application to Western Europe is more and more problematical, has a new lease on life in Eastern Europe. In the West, general material betterment has not completely resolved the class struggle. However, it has transformed the bloody conflicts (1850–1950) into ritualized confrontations where the redistribution of national wealth is a matter of bargaining. The Paris Commune has been succeeded by inflation, or at worst, the Grenelle Accords.*

In the East, the class struggle remains real. It can even be said to have destabilized Communist regimes more than it did the capitalist regimes between 1850–1950. At this point, it is necessary to distinguish between the form of the class struggle in the USSR proper, and that in the satellite countries.

The obvious "foreign," "compradorist"—to use a Maoist word—elements in Hungary, Poland, and the GDR brings into sharp relief the conflicts between the oligarchy and the working class. Russophobia has equally animated Czechoslovakia and Rumania. In Russia, the political consciousness of the working class has been retarded by the character of their new class, which came into being by an internal takeover. Worker alienation takes on a tragic dimension in this largely agricultural country. But the awakening of the people and exploited classes from their dormancy could once again set the USSR into motion.

*Grenelle Accords—a constellation of laws related to the rights of unions in industrial enterprises. Among other things, worker salaries were raised and hours of work were shortened. Signed in 1968. —Trans.

Chapter 5

AN EVER-TRIUMPHANT CAPITALISM

Economically, Russia is behind certain outer lying republics, clearly behind her satellites, and very much behind the advanced capitalist countries. Her relative backwardness becomes more and more marked. Marxism-Leninism does not explain such economic perversions as the Soviet Union. It causes them. In Marxist jargon, we can say that the Soviet mode of production has become an obstacle to the development of its productive forces. Today, the economy of the USSR can no longer be considered the definitive way to organize productive forces, or the economic end of human history. Although it describes itself as a socialist society, the USSR will never achieve the final stage of Communism, a society of abundance without money. The most basic tenet of socialism, "to each according to his work," has no application there. The way the Soviet system is presently organized, it is even less in accord with the principle of Communism, "to each according to his needs."

Marx's critique of capitalism is fundamentally wrong insofar as it holds that a breakdown in production automatically leads to a superior form of economic organization. It is not because an economic system founders that it will be transformed by the elites or swept away by the exploited classes.[47]

Production can be suspended at a certain level and mire society in stagnation without the exploited masses feeling the least need to take violent recourse. Only a few Russian intellectuals are capable of opposing the system of Soviet exploitation in their writings. Fewer

still are willing. They are carefully cut off from the masses. These few, who represent the only dynamic elements in Soviet society, are not alone a sufficient incendiary. For the masses to rise up, they would have to conceive an alternative society. They would require a revolutionary *project,* or some kind of reformist goal insofar as the masses generally eschew violence and are more socially democratic in character. Russian intellectuals are incapable of formulating such a model and of inspiring the masses with it. Although it is difficult for a Westerner to imagine, this model exists. The masses in the countries of Eastern Europe have only to look to the West on the other side of the iron curtain. Here is a model not only theoretically conceived but realized in fact. It represents something which is eminently possible. If the Soviet masses were to see the West without distortion in its social-democratic form, they would see it as it is: egalitarian, liberal, and efficient.

The Western Aggressor

Between 1917 and 1950, the Soviet system represented an ideological threat to the West, while the West presented a military threat to the Soviet Union. Their relationship has recently reversed itself in both ideological and military realms. Henceforth, the West will be an ideological threat to the Soviet Union and the USSR a military threat to the West.

Between the two world wars, the capitalist world was shaken by economic crises, in 1921 and 1929. The crises of overproduction (or the insufficiency of mass demand, if one wants to use Keynesian rather than Marxist vocabulary) succeeded each other. The Communist system offered a radical alternative, especially when Stalin took over, involving planning, growth, and full employment. While under seige militarily, the USSR emanated confidence in its ideology. If it could hold out militarily, the unnerved West would fall to the ground like overripe fruit. After all, how would it be possible to resist economic efficiency? Soviet culture reflected this great confidence in the future. It was evident in films and on billboards, which captured the imagination of a partially literate populace better than books. It was a brilliant, triumphant culture. The films of Eisenstein, Dovzhenko, or Pudovkine, and, after the war, of Kalatozov and Tchukhrai were viewed with fascination by the West. *Bolshevik* posters decorated

many young Westerner's bedrooms. The Soviet Union had something positive to offer the capitalist world in crisis. It was both economically and culturally dynamic. The West no longer has a military superiority inherited from its earlier industrial development.

Where are things now?

Communism has failed economically. After rapid gains under Stalin, the system is mired in stagnation. While capitalism suffered from an illness between the two wars, beginning in 1945 it recovered and achieved regulated economic growth. The solution to the problem of overproduction was simple. Still, it had to be thought out. Workers must be able to consume more. An increase in the standard of living for workers was instrumental in the equilibrium and survival of the system. Consequently, capitalism grew and flourished. In doing so, it put to rest the Marxist theory concerning absolute or relative pauperization. Between 1945 and 1973, the rate of growth of the capitalist countries was remarkable. The regression of the USSR, relative to Western Europe also *increased* significantly. While the European working class was overwhelmed with a deluge of automobiles, refrigerators, televisions, transistors, showers, and bathtubs, the USSR stolidly continued its arms production while the overall standard of living stagnated. Paradoxically, in this period the USSR again fell behind militarily. It subsequently achieved nuclear parity with the United States, and probably now has a slight superiority in conventional weapons. It has become a military threat to the West. But the rich, free, efficient, and egalitarian West has become an ideological threat to the Soviet system.

The capitalist world's recent economic crisis has given some hope to the Soviet leaders. Yet, they must now admit it is only a matter of technical adjustment at a superior phase of development. Because wealth and productivity have attained unexpected levels, especially in comparison to Soviet norms, the nature of economic expansion must change in the West. To continue to function, capitalism must direct itself toward perfecting techniques and products, toward achieving greater equality of wealth, and generally a more efficient use of technology and manpower.

Moreover, the ease with which the Western system stabilizes itself demonstrates the superiority of developed capitalism to Communism. The Soviet economy continues to stagnate as does the Russian standard of living. The USSR never did overtake its capitalist rivals

as Khrushchev had vaunted and hoped. The Soviet leaders are conscious of their new inferior status. A headline in *Le Monde* in December 1975 reads: "Brezhnev reproaches the bourgeois world for its ideological infiltrations and economic pressures." (His speech was given before the United Workers Party Congress in Poland.) Is this not tantamount to admitting the new threat of the West? Stalin feared armies, not Western ideals.

On the other side, leaders in Western states take the Russian military threat very seriously, while they ridicule Soviet ideology. The USSR has nothing to offer the exploited classes of Western Europe that could threaten the stability of countries such as France, Great Britain, West Germany, or Italy. Giscard d'Estaing is a case in point. In military matters, he increasingly seeks harmony with NATO, recognizing the real Russian military threat. Ideologically, it is a different story. During his trip to Moscow in the autumn of 1975, he placed a wreath on Lenin's tomb. This put the Russian leaders into a state of apoplectic rage. Giscard sincerely wanted to make a display of his friendship, as a Moslem would by attending a Catholic mass. The Kremlin immediately grasped the historical significance of this act. Western Europeans disdain Communist *ideas* because they no longer fear them. What was merely diplomacy on Giscard's part represented a different kind of burial for their comrade Lenin. Ideologically speaking, Leninism was put to rest.

The Triumph of Capitalism in Europe

The years 1945–65 will prove to be decisive in the rivalry between Eastern and Western Europe. *In these two blocks,* the ideological strength of Communism began to abate.

In the West, the important Communist parties have been weakened (France) or have taken a social-democratic tack (Italy). In December 1975, for the first time in its history, the PCF took a different approach. One of the most orthodox parties in the West, the PCF chose to engage in criticism of the internal politics of the Soviet Union. *L'Humanité* engaged in polemics with *Pravda* concerning the Soviet work camps. The PCF directly accused the leaders in Moscow of anti-Sovietism. Why this new critical attitude on the part of the most Stalinist Communist party in the West? Have the leaders of the

PCF discovered the moral superiority of democracy? Certainly not. However, they have increasingly come to recognize flaws in the Soviet model. In the 1950s, the Stalinist system appeared bloody but efficient. Whether one came down for or against Communism, it had a fascinating appeal. Militant Communists and Communist sympathizers alike were deeply troubled by Stalin's crimes. Nevertheless, the will to power, bloodletting, and radical industrialization gave the Stalinist model a strange allure and a certain coherency.

When the concentration camps are seen alongside economic stagnation, it takes on the ridiculous aspect of Oriental despotism, reactionary and extremely inefficient at the same time. Formerly, the USSR massacred its citizens by the millions, but it did not immediately thereafter beg millions of tons of wheat from America. The French Communist Party can no longer invoke the Soviet model. It perceives its failures even if it doesn't fully comprehend them. In order to be viable, the French Communists must separate themselves from such a grotesque system.

The cultural setback of the French Communist Party preceded its political setback.

Between 1935 and 1960, Communism was the center of French cultural and intellectual life. It inspired excellent novels. History and philosophy were influenced by Marxism. Soviet cinema flourished. One was either for or against Communism but not indifferent. The problems it presented—though simply interesting variations on the problem of squaring the circle—were at that time, provocative.

All that is finished. In 1975, the French youth are unfamiliar with the various manifestations of a crude Communist culture. The attitude of the youth toward the Communist party is marked by indifference, not antipathy, excluding the leftist minority, which is becoming even smaller. Where are the Maoists of yesterday? This is at the root of the steady decline of the PCF. It is no longer hated. It holds no fascination, even if it still holds some sway electorally.

Curiously, this phenomenon of disaffection without antipathy has also spread throughout the countries of Eastern Europe, as *The Joke,* written by Milan Kundera, shows so well. Around 1965, Czechoslovakian students simply stopped seeing problems in Marxist terms. Long hair, pop music, and hitchhiking had spread through the more advanced People's Democracies. The Prague Spring did not emerge from a debate on the *true* path of Marxism. Rather, it

was motivated by liberty and the well-being of Czechoslovakia, in the tradition of the springtime of the people in 1848.*

Hungary Is Not Very Different

In Eastern Europe, Soviet culture retreats everywhere in the face of an invading Western culture, especially Anglo-Saxon. It is difficult for a Frenchman to conceive just how far a country like Hungary appears to have "normalized" according to Western criteria. The "socialist" mode of production does not seem to have brought in its wake any notable cultural differences. There is no more difference between France and Hungary as between France and Federal Germany—even less in fact. Every Western phenomenon has its equivalent in Hungary, even indications of social dissolution, so dear to the French Communist Party.

Pop Music: The youth center on the banks of the Danube in Budapest is the scene of young people dancing the latest Western variations on the jerk. In the summer of 1975, partners could be seen doing the bump. The band is Hungarian, but nine out of ten of their songs are in English. The tenth is Magyarian, not Russian. There is one difference from the West. The youth center closes at ten P.M. and alcohol is not drunk there, but great quantities of Coca-Cola are. Individuals with red arm bands assure order. They stand out in a crowd and have features similar to members of the Strategic Air Command in France. The regime clearly fears its youth.

Clothing: No difference. Jeans are everywhere. It is not known where they come from since they can't be found in stores. We are here presented with one of the miracles of the second sector of the economy.

Hair: Long. Eastern European youth follow the Western fashion precisely and zealously. The counterculture goes so far as to pin sam-

*Springtime of Prague 1848—the beginning of Czech national politics. Revolutionaries called for the transformation of Austria along federalist lines and the Czech right to become a free member of a Hapsburg association of nations. Hopes for political autonomy were frustrated by the suppression of the revolution the following year. —Trans.

ples of capitalist advertising on their walls. In university dorms, advertising cut out from Western magazines, which show television sets and record players, can be seen. These things must be seen for what they are—manifestations of anti-Communist, anti-Soviet, and procapitalist attitudes. The peoples of Central Europe want their national independence, internal freedom, and perhaps even capitalism. Here we find the sharpest contrast between Western and "satellite" cultures. French students, dead drunk, stoned, or tripping on LSD, could never see the capitalist system as revolutionary or desirable. They were wrong.

Leftists: Traces (to use a term which can be found in a chemical analysis report). A few sons of Hungarian middle-class families are followers of Ché or Mao.

Hippies: The train stations of Budapest are bursting with young long-haired Czechs and Poles, who are impossible to distinguish from the Western youth traveling there for the summer, by train or by thumbing rides at the side of the road.

Drugs: There are no statistics. But during a two-week visit, I took part—purely as a spectator—in two Hungarian hashish parties. One was on the shores of Lake Balatan, and the other was in Budapest. It seems that these things only take place in the summer, when questionable types from the West come to Hungary with the stuff tucked away in their suitcases. Michael Poniatowski or Alexandre de Marenches, head of the French secret service, find it difficult to believe that people sometimes "get stoned" in Communist regimes.

Solzhenitsyn: Obviously forbidden. But his books are often found in English in the majority of libraries.

The Pill: Widespread use in Hungary, although almost nonexistent in Russia. Moscow is truly far from Budapest.

The leaders in the People's Democracies are getting more and more soft with regard to Western culture. At first, the Hungarian regime opposed blue jeans and long hair. Later, seeing an opportunity to gather some popularity, Kadar accepted all this with good grace.

The elites are not very far behind the masses. The orthodoxy of their Marxism loosens with the changing fashion. In the 1950s, Marxist orthodoxy was the equivalent of the crew cut. Philosophers, historians, and sociologists in the satellite countries increasingly turned to the West for inspiration. In Hungary, humanities students translated for their fellow sociologists the works of Pierre Bourdieu on the mechanisms of the perpetuation of class distinction. In all the economic, sociological, and historical works published in the People's Democracies, quotes from Marx, Engels, Lenin, and other Soviet authors are progressively decreasing. An analysis of speeches given by Polish or Hungarian leaders also shows that political vocabularly is being progressively de-Sovietized. In the three most traditionally Western countries—Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland—the process of de-Sovietization and cultural de-Marxification are most advanced. In a country like Hungary, that process is completed. A work published in English and Russian discusses the character of economic reform since 1968.[48] An introduction by Istvan Friss does not contain a single quote from Marx, Engels, or Lenin. The vocabulary in this article is not completely de-Marxified, however. In the midst of Western economic terminology can be found such Marxist expressions as "socially mandated work" or "increased capital expenditure." On the whole, the article is noteworthy for its common sense and healthy empiricism.

For both the Communist and anti-Communist visitor wishing to find some socially exotic system, Hungary has nothing much to offer. It boggles the mind how radical sympathizers of the PCF can enthuse over the transportation system of Budapest. Those not of their persuasion can take heart that the traffic jam, a stereotype of capitalist countries, is increasingly common in "an advanced Communist system." However, an alert tourist can still, perhaps, conjure up feelings of sociological disorientation.

We are at an apartment building which houses an average Budapest bureaucrat. The furniture is a superb example of a plastic imitation of wood. A standard-sized bookcase displays some books; a television, stove, refrigerator, and bathtub can also be found in the apartment. We could be at Massy-Palaiseau.*

About ten Hungarian students of both sexes are gathered there and two Frenchmen about the same age.

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*Massy-Palaiseau—cities south of Paris within commuting distance of the capital. Many bureaucrats inhabit the apartment complexes there. —Trans.

An intelligent discussion is taking place about the respective merits of continental philosophy and English logical-positivism. Aside from the language, nothing could be more commonplace. We could still be at Massy-Palaiseau. Dope begins to be smoked following this amiable conversation. The observant tourist is present but doesn't take part. He tries—unsuccessfully—to pick up a young Hungarian girl. We could still be in Paris. At about three A.M., he is bored by the conversation and exasperated by the incomprehensible Magyar jargon and conversation which flows from the effect of hashish. Depressed by his repeated failures to pick up someone up, the tourist splits. Once outside, his thoughts turn toward the camps of the Soviet army, which are probably no more than four kilometers away. These camps are strange islands of discipline, surrounded by a sea of normal life. In Hungary, the archipelago of Red Army camps represents the Gulag. Behind the gates of these camps, the Soviet army humiliates Hungary, impeding its development. In the Socialist bloc, it is not certain who is the prisoner and who the jailor. The Hungarians are imprisoned in Hungary, the Soviets in their barracks. The Soviet camps watch over Hungary; Hungary encircles the outposts of this perverted civilization.

Tanks against hashish—who will win out?

The Martians Get Nasty

Developments in Soviet science fiction indicate that Soviet society is in the process of losing the exalted optimism that characterized Stalinism. The future societies projected in science fiction largely reflect the society which produces them. The kinds of science fiction are infinitely varied. It is not limited to giant sociological themes; love, death, and human folly also have their place. Nevertheless, it is possible to place the majority of science fiction on a social *optimism/pessimism* continuum.

Western European science fiction has successively "dealt with" all our social problems as creative material. H. G. Wells's work is pessimistic. Class conflict and foreign invasion are the most obvious themes of his two works. *The Time Machine* (1895) projects into the future a caricature of Victorian society where the workers, having become cave dwellers, find their sustenance in devouring the bourgeois. *The War of the Worlds* (1898) describes a Martian inva-

sion of England. The earthlings are on the verge of succumbing when their germs infect the invader.

The different relations that humans and extra-terrestrials have in science fiction—friendship, invasion, colonization, and integration—give a fairly good idea of how a society perceives foreigners. The earthlings can represent Americans, Russians, French, or even larger groups of people, such as Westerners, and "the Socialist bloc." Extra-terrestrials represent the Other, the rest of the planet Earth, the foreign. In the West, the cold war gave birth to a genre of literature in which the Martians played the role of Communists, while human beings represented Americans. Throughout the 1950s, the human beings in American science fiction spent most of their time repulsing invasions from Mars, Jupiter, or Arcturia, i.e., Russian Communists. The humans (Americans) generally won out. Pessimism was not absolutely called for.

American science fiction did not treat class conflicts at great length, probably because there is no real conception of them in the United States. On the other hand, European science fiction written between the wars—during the decline of capitalism—continued to produce literature like *The Time Machine,* where social breakdown could be traced to internal causes. I cite two other examples inspired by this work. *The War of the Salamanders* (1937) and *R.U.R.* (1920) by Karel Capek. This brilliant Czech author used the medium of science fiction to raise problems posed by the proliferation of the proletariat and the rise of automation. But Western European science fiction, particularly in England, is not without invasion scenes, like its American counterpart. John Wyndham is certainly one of the great specialists in describing such catastrophes (*The Kraken Wakes,* 1953; *The Midwich Cuckoos,* 1957; *The Day of the Triffids,* 1951).

In the United States and Great Britain, short stories and novels that began with nuclear holocaust were also frequent.

Western science fiction cannot be thought of as basically homogeneous. Liberal societies pose no literary dogmas, and exceptions to these tendencies are numerous. In healthy societies, a large part of science fiction simply has no relation at all to class conflict. The subject matter of the genre may simply be the sense of wonder or the possibilities of science (the United States in the 1920s), and the distant and quite possibly nefarious consequences of technological

progress. Contemporary science fiction is concerned with the possibilities for extending life, the grafting of organs, pollution, the depletion of energy resources, and the present vices of a consumer society. A large part of science fiction deals with matters removed from ideology and even logic. I refer in particular to the works of Isaac Asimov, such as *The Robots* (1950).

In a totalitarian country, such as the USSR, science fiction, as with the rest of culture, is strictly controlled. It creates models of the future, and, consequently, often encroaches upon the preserve of Soviet sociology. However, science fiction writers are often freer than their sociologist colleagues who are specialists in official Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

Censors in totalitarian regimes do not pay equal attention to all sectors of cultural life. Contemporary history, sociology, and classical literature are scrutinized very closely. The history of precapitalist eras and "marginal" genres of literature, such as science fiction, have greater leeway by engaging in symbolic critiques than studies dealing with contemporary, concrete concerns of the system.

Consequently, a study of Soviet science fiction is much more informative than perusal of an explicitly ideological text published in Moscow, which monotonously describes the present, past, and future triumphs of Communism. Soviet science fiction today is increasingly reluctant to proclaim its triumphs.

The heroes of Soviet science fiction in the 1940s and 50s journeyed among the stars as peaceful explorers, full of good intentions. These were the kind of themes dealt with in *The Andromeda Cloud,* by Ivan Efremov (1957–58), or in *The Ballad of the Stars,* by G. Altov and V. Zhuravleva. The Earth (USSR) was witnessing constant progress, and there were no foreign threats. Socialism alone seemed able to engender the technological capacity for conquest of space. In the books of this period, astronauts always took off from a Communist Earth.

This was the era of Sputnik and Gagarin.*

In the 1940s and 50s, Soviet science fiction was optimistic. It was a fairly accurate reflection of the values and myths of the Stalinist period. In *The Ballad of the Stars,* explorers from Earth come across kind extra-terrestrials who are without guile, but unhappy because

*Yuri Gagharin—Russian cosmonaut and first human in space (1961). —Trans.

they are unfamiliar with the joys of work. Not everyone can be a Stakhanovite.*

Since then, the Americans' landing on the moon has dealt a blow to the Russians' socio-technological confidence. Their pessimism is felt in Soviet science fiction. The rapport between humans and extra-terrestrials is no longer what it was. It is no longer so simple to evince the beauties and efficiencies of Socialism to *Western extra-terrestrials.* Previously, the Strugatski brothers wrote orthodox science fiction at a time when, as they said, "there was a choice between what is good and what is better." Their works now describe the difficulties between humans (Russians) and extra-terrestrials (capitalists). *It is difficult to be a God* (1964) focuses on the difficulties of the historian who transcends time and space and confronts a fairly mysterious kind of medieval society. As its title indicates, *The Second Martian Invasion* (1967) tells the story of a very successful Martian attack; and the invaders exact a heavy tribute from the Earth. The two Strugatski brothers had the prudence to give their humans Greek rather than Russian names. Arkadi and Boris Strugatski attempted a very far-out kind of science fiction with *Monday Begins Saturday* (1966) and even entered the realm of the obscure with *The Snail on the Slope* (1968). The regime now considers them dissidents. The editors of the Siberian magazine that published *The Snail on the Slope* were immediately dismissed from their jobs. *Mutants from the Mist,* written in 1966–67, is a clear allegory of Soviet society. This work gave Arkadi and Boris Strugatski their rightful place as leaders of samizdat. This book was published in October 1972.

Andre Gorbovski's *Futility* is a strange work about a lack of communication between extra-terrestrials and humans. In this short story, the two species never quite establish contact.

Soviet culture and Soviet science fiction has lost its ever-present optimism. The world beyond is increasingly unfathomable or downright hostile. Marxism-Leninism is no longer seen as all-knowning and all-powerful.

In contrast, Western science fiction relates stories of how fears and problems are overcome. Extra-terrestrial invaders are be-

*Alexis Stakhanov—a coal miner in the Donets Basin, was reported to have overfulfilled his daily quota by 1400 percent in the course of a shift hewing coal and became the model for an officially promoted movement for stepped-up production. —Trans.

friended. In some particularly bold short stories, there can even be found sexual relations between extra-terrestrials and humans. Their offspring possess features of both species (J. Boyd, *The Pollinators of Eden,* 1969). The extra-terrestrials are a species of giant sensual flowers. Still, the imagination of the reader must not be overstrained. They have human as well as plant-like characteristics, in addition to being very nice. However, too much must not be made of the tendencies in Western science fiction. There were exceptions to the formula of hostility during the cold war. And exceptions to the theme of detente are also to be found.

On the whole, the capitalist bloc must be seen as having increasing confidence in itself relative to both foreign and internal relations, at least insofar as science fiction is any example.

Rumanian science fiction is prolific and of high quality, although not very original. It is curious to note that this country, which is a miniature Stalinist state, self-governing, and strongly anti-Russian, often sees its extra-terrestrials as dominators and manipulators. For a Rumanian, Martians are Russians. National pessimism often wins out over optimism in Rumanian science fiction.[49]

The last two science fiction novels published in French translation from *Mir* of Moscow strengthen our impression that anxiety will continue to predominate in Soviet science fiction.

In *Cavalry From Nowhere* (1975), the extra-terrestrials in the form of pink, red, or purple clouds cover the Earth. They are peaceful but technologically far in advance of humans. Their arrival heralds an era of interplanetary cooperation. Can these pink clouds be Westerners? Are the humans in this novel Soviets? The symbolism of Abramov and his son, the authors of this story, is carefully constructed. To better study the planet Earth, the extra-terrestrials create doubles of randomly selected men, terrestrial objects, and even entire cities. The action takes place in the South Pole, France, the United States, and Greenland. Soviet territory remains inviolate. When a Soviet work of science fiction is written, all social situations which directly or obviously humiliate or compromise the Communist system are precluded. The Strugatski brothers could not have dared to have their war-like Martians land within the Socialist camp. Yet, in *Cavalry From Nowhere,* Soviet scientists can be seen in the midst of a struggle with the unknown, completely perplexed, and rather helpless. We are far from the conquests of galaxies by a triumphant

humanity, or, more literally, global conquest by a triumphant Communism.

The plot of recent Soviet science fiction is placed in a more current and more Earth-bound setting. It might be said that its plots are more mundane. The setting for science fiction accurately reflects the preoccupations of Soviet society. In 1976, the immediate internal problems in the Soviet Union predominate; and this is paralleled in Soviet science fiction. It no longer focuses on interplanetary space and the third millennium. Instead, it addresses itself to Earth's problems in the last quarter of the twentieth century. *Self-Knowledge,* a novel by Vladimir Savtchenko, is set in the USSR of the 1970s. Because it involves a technological process whereby human beings are replicated, it can be identified as a work of science fiction. The plot revolves around long store lines, the use of managerial pronouncements for toilet paper, bureaucratic red tape, the officiousness of the police. What is an imaginative work of art becomes a masterpiece of realism. Science fiction, a "subordinate" literary discipline, is sufficiently free from the confines of socialist realism to rise, on occasion, to a pure form of realism.

A reader of "Communist" science fiction cannot help but be struck by the theme of human replication, as a subtheme of biological manipulation generally. Human "replication" can be found in *Solaris* by Stanislas Lem (Poland 1961), in *Wax Figurines* by Mircea Oprita (Rumania 1973), and even more directly in the latest two Soviet novels, *Cavalry from Nowhere* and *Self-Knowledge.* The Communist system manipulates men and splits them in two, setting up strict distinctions between official "Socialist" or "Communist" man and real man. While the former is, at least in theory, infused with happiness and good will, the latter desperately tries to join his sundered self, curses the system, and sometimes revolts against it. The economic duality of the Communist system, the coexistence of state planning and the black market, perfectly expresses the duality of Communist man. Through lower productivity and the black market, *homo economicus* struggles against the model *homo stakhanovicus,* which is held up for emulation by the system.

Are we pushing the analysis of symbolism so far? The case does not rest with one particular novel. But the astonishingly frequent occurence of the replication theme throughout science fiction literature in Eastern European countries presumably has some significance. Biological manipulation and replication must be seen to have

a certain relation to the manipulation and schizophrenia which are the social and psychological essense of Communism.

Communism and the Bizarre

Communist societies dislike the obscure, the paradoxical, and the implicit in art and literature. For example, in his work on *The Historical Novel,* Lukacs elaborates on a strain of the Marxist theory of culture, which is not fundamentally different, although a little more refined, from what can be found in the ponderous works of Lenin, Trotsky, and Zhdanov.[50] The beautiful is the true. The true is the Marxist interpretation of social relations. It took Lukacs not less than 420 pages and 35 references to Hegel, as well as 43 allusions to Marx-Engels, to arrive at the conclusion that the high-point in the history of the novel is the work of Walter Scott. Ivanhoe! Ivanhoe! The Office of French Radio and Television, or rather the former RTF, came to the same conclusion with less intellectual effort. Without pedantry, they published their conclusion in the pages of a weekly TV guide during the 1960s.

As a result of Marxism-Leninism, Soviet science fiction is the least original and the most orthodox. But when it deviates from Marxist-Leninist-Zhdanovite-Lukacsian categories, it becomes quite good, as if by enchantment. At end, one wonders if Marxism-Leninism has not accidentally given birth to an absolutely rigid canon of aesthetic vacuity. In any case, the beautiful, or rather the good, in science fiction is found in the element of *surprise,* or *astonishment.* However, the ideological projections of Marxism-Leninism are always fairly predictable, in contrast to its practical applications, which throw the study of sociology into turmoil. In brief, because the West lives in a world which is by and large rational, it can tolerate cultural ambiguities. On the other hand, the Communist man, who lives in an alien world, truly needs a rational and reassuring culture. Soviet science fiction is, on the whole, the reverse image of the Soviet economy. The staid character of Soviet culture is the reverse of the unpredictable character of industrial production.

A French, English, or American reader of Soviet science fiction can detect a subdued sense of irony, if he is prepared to look for it and can conceptualize the application of Marxist-Leninist formulas to the

conquest of space, technological progress, and the time-space continuum.

Unorthodox science fiction writing tends to turn toward the alien, the bizarre, and the mysterious, as with the Strugatski brothers. It also holds true for the greatest contemporary author of science fiction, a Pole by the name of Stanislas Lem. The worlds he describes are mysterious, and his extra-terrestrials are neither humanoids nor disembodied voices. When humans escape them, they set out from the worlds they have discovered a little disoriented.

It must be understood that unorthodox science fiction in Communist countries, which is suffused with the *irrational,* is in fact *realistic.*

The apparent unreality truly lays bear the economic and social reality of Marxism-Leninism. For example, in his book, *Eden,* Stanislas Lem presents his earthling heroes with something that resembles a factory. Goods are produced without a known purpose and then simultaneously destroyed. This all happens automatically on a single conveyor belt. There is an air of unreality; yet in actuality it is quite realistic. The economy of Stalin, of the Soviets, and of Communism turns like the conveyor built in *Eden,* incessantly, uselessly, and to no purpose. It goes without saying that Stanislas Lem's books do not appear in the Soviet bookstores. Lem and the Strugatskis describe the Soviet reality too well, even if their works seem incomprehensible to us Westerners, alienated by a rational mode of production—capitalism. For similar reasons abstract art is forbidden in the USSR. Abstract paintings perfectly capture the Soviet reality. The USSR is like a well-executed Kandinsky painting.There is one difference—it is reality, not art.

Pessimism and the realm of the "unreal" advance together in Soviet science fiction. To defend itself, the regime would have to completely silence its science fiction writers. The works of Marx, Lenin, and of Leonid Brezhnev will soon be the only works of science fiction tolerated by the regime.

Part II

CHOICE AND HABIT

Chapter 6

A CONSCIOUSLY FASCIST RULING CLASS

Do the Soviet rulers know what is taking place in the USSR? An evaluation of the capacity of the Soviet rulers to intelligently decide the course of their country is one of the main problems of Sovietology, and probably the most difficult. Can this question be given something more than generalizations for an answer?

If we limit ourselves to official pronouncements from the Kremlin, the new class would have to be characterized as abysmally ignorant. On the other hand, if we consider Brezhnev as the most intelligent of men, we would have to take it for granted that he understands the Soviet situation perfectly. However, we do not have to choose between these two alternatives. We can try to place the new class between utter unawareness and perfect intelligence.

The oligarchy in the Kremlin is more aware of things than one generally thinks. But it is not lacking in certain blindnesses.

Is Stupidity Structurally Induced?

In order to triumph, revolutionary Marxist theory had to struggle against a number of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas. While Marxism-Leninism remains what it always has been, an irrepressible ideological force, many capitalist ideas have long since and forever been eradicated. The only scientifically accurate theory of society, constantly added to and enriched by new deductions, is Marxism-Leninism, the theoretical expression of modern social progress, the vanguard of

> the forces of socialism, democracy, and social and national liberation. The historical experience of the twentieth century has already furnished irrefutable proof of the truth of Marxism-Leninism. Bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals have in vain tried to establish new myths. But they could not stop humanity in its march toward socialism, because it alone conforms to the objective needs brought to maturity by social and historical progress.[1]

The report of the Central Committee of the CPSU at its Twenty-Fourth Congress states:

> Contemporary capitalism is very often characterized by the fact that it adapts itself to new global situations. Confronted with the necessity of struggling against socialism, the centers of power in capitalist countries fear more than ever that the class struggle will take the form of a revolutionary mass movement. . . .[2]

Eric Wolf, an American anthropologist, makes use of a concept to describe the attitude of many ruling classes in the course of some remarkable deductions about peasant wars in the twentieth century.[3] I refer to the concept of *structurally induced stupidity,* which deserves a more general and systematized application. Certain ruling groups, because of the way they are organized, seem to develop a mentality which is irredeemably stupid. They are totally unconscious of the nature of social relations of which they form a part. Bureaucratic organizations strongly encourage indifference to the fate of the masses, because they depersonalize the relations of economic exploitation. Eric Wolf is interested in the social and economic behavior of the mandarin class of prerevolutionary China. Structurally induced stupidity is generally manifested in the odious behavior of the privileged toward the exploited, during a prerevolutionary period. Afterwards, one speaks of the blindness of the class which was overthrown. Bureaucratic organizations are not the sole cause of blindness in the exploiting classes. Aristocrats in feudal times as well as very respectable bourgeois in the course of history have been subject to innumerable stupidities and misconceptions, which precipitated their own demise. The Skvortsov text quoted above would suggest that the Soviet oligarchy is one of these stupid classes. It is true that its behavior manifests the most characteristic symptom of structurally induced stupidity, scorn for the people. The analysis of capitalism which Skvortsov proposes no longer impresses us with its perceptiveness. Is this a case which combines scorn with blindness?

Such evidence notwithstanding, we don't have to take these absurd texts too seriously. We shouldn't consider the Soviet ruling class simply stupid and imperceptive. The lack of responsibility inherent in the bureaucratic nature of Communist economic exploitation is, in large part, offset by a grasp of Marxism and the tradition of ideological competition with the West. The Soviet bureaucracy has enthusiastically adopted the Asiatic mode of production, but unlike its counterpart in mandarin times, it does not live as if it were the Middle Kingdom, isolated and without competition. The Soviet system came into being in order to combat the West.

The Three Levels of Soviet Culture

Texts published in Moscow constitute the first and most visible stratum of Soviet culture. They are exclusively directed toward mass consumption and Western readers. The second stratum of Soviet culture is hidden and reserved for the privileged.

The Soviet leaders who have these orthodox "analyses" published in Moscow no longer themselves take Marxism-Leninism very seriously. These texts deal with matters which are too remote, too at odds with reality. A certain cynicism is evident in these men, and, admittedly, a certain sense of humor. The men of the Kremlin know perfectly well that their system is in a crisis, that they have brought about potentially deadly class antagonisms, and that their system is inferior to those in developed capitalist countries, as far as social justice and economic efficiency is concerned. These texts are not published for their own edification.

The ruling class and certain specialists have for their own use several thousand books, which must not fall into just anyone's hands.

For example, René Dumont learned that his study, *Sovkhoz, Kolkhoz, or the Problems Facing Communism,* had been translated into Russian; but only several thousand copies were printed, to be distributed to certain specialists.[4] On the other hand, Alec Nove, an English economist who specializes in Communist systems, stated in 1969 that there were frequent open discussions at the University of Moscow about the necessity of economic reform.[5]

In private, Soviet economists admit to not taking very seriously the

catastrophic pronouncements of the Kremlin concerning the contemporary crisis of capitalism. Paradoxically, the Soviets who calculate the extent of *their* crisis are more capable than we are to assess the gravity of *our* own. Economic stagnation in certain advanced capitalist countries appears to high Soviet functionaries as downright desirable when compared to the growing disorganization in the Soviet economy.[6]

The cynicism of the Soviet rulers spreads even to the cultural realm. Apparatchiki and professionals attend movie houses (domkino) to see private showings of Western films such as *Clockwork Orange* or *Last Tango in Paris.*

We must not think, like Henry Kissinger, that the Russian Communists are "ideologically motivated." Rather, we should see them as perfect cynics. Kissinger was wrong when he wrote in 1969 that "the Communist rulers never tire in affirming Marxism-Leninism as the key to the superiority that they see themselves possess over the rest of the world. Insofar as they are Marxist-Leninists, they are convinced they understand the historical process much better than the non-Communist world."[7] They certainly affirm these things but they are very far from being convinced of it.

We must not view the Kremlin oligarchs as weakened and paralyzed by ideology. On the contrary, they undoubtedly assess fairly accurately and objectively the nature of their own social system.

The Soviet society is a class society. But the potentially inflammatory class division has led to a system composed of *three cultures.*

1. *Official culture:* is exclusively directed toward the masses, and is obviously orthodox. This does not imply it is static.

2. *The clandestine culture of the government:* is highly Westernized and by and large composed of translated books, films, and newspapers from capitalist countries and the People's Democracies, who culturally dominate the Soviet sphere.

3. *The clandestine culture of the dissidents:* consists of samizdat, a varied collection of writings whose common characteristic is that they are not published and circulate in manuscript form. The clandestine dissident culture is clearly less "Western" than the clandestine government culture.

The Real Limits to Intelligence and Dynamism

In 1975, the Western press discovered that the leaders in the Kremlin had become very old men indeed. Brezhnev was approaching seventy, and Kosygin seventy-two. This is the natural consequence of a system in which the criteria for advancement is seniority and submission to one's superiors. An elective system alone can prevent the establishment of a gerontocracy.

Age does not necessarily soften characters. Rather, its obvious effect has been to harden the demeanor of the Kremlin oligarchy. Stalin became openly paranoid at the end of his life. Franco did not seem to have mellowed on the threshold of death. One can only hope that the old men who make up the Politburo of the Communist party are more in the Franco than Stalin mold, that they behave fairly reasonably. In short, one can only hope that they become decrepit, not paranoid.

The main consequence of the *complete* senescence in the Communist party hierarchy is the lack of boldness. Without being "anti-age" it is possible to see grave problems posed by the *complete* absence of middle-aged people at the summit of power in the Soviet Union. The conservatism which classicly characterizes age affects the heart of the Soviet system.

Many people of advanced age are brimming with intelligence and humor. But the way people are recruited for the bureaucracy virtually guarantees a selection of leaders who lack imagination.

More precisely, it automatically reduces things to the level of mediocrity. This is as true for Communist parties as for every other kind of organization, such as armies and churches. Large bureaucracies are organized in order to "churn things out," not to innovate. The lack of imagination which marks Soviet leaders is therefore perfectly understandable.

Amalric believes that the bureaucratic mentality is spreading to all the elites in the Soviet Union, including those in scientific and cultural fields. All strata of the society give evidence of bureaucratic stupidity.

However, certain national cultures seem capable of producing large, dynamic, and innovative organizations. External pressures for change are unnecessary. Some particularly authoritarian cultures,

such as existed in Prussia, come to mind. The Germans seem to adapt very effectively to large bureaucracies. Obedience is fundamental to the Prussian style of education. Perhaps imaginative individuals can possess "obedience and discipline" in certain kinds of culture. They can, in fact, attain the uppermost reaches of social organizations without insurmountable difficulties. The efficiency of the system can be traced to the correspondence between an authoritarian family structure and bureaucratic authority.

In the majority of non-German Western nations there is an obvious tension between the civic and bureaucratic culture. In the civic culture, this antagonism is epitomized by the association of discipline with stupidity.

Curiously, one of the best analyses of bureaucratic rationality, or the stupidity inherent in large bureaucracies, is that of Max Weber, who was, after all, a German. He was a partisan of representative democracy, not out of principle, but in order to short-circuit bureaucratic inertia.

As examples of dynamic German bureaucracies, one can cite industrial conglomerates before and after the war and, certainly, the Wehrmacht. Many of the military innovations of the Second World War—tank warfare and the use of parachutes—are of German origin. The relative success of Communist Prussia, the GDR, is another example of how Prussian authoritarianism adapted to the bureaucratic structure. Students of Eastern Europe have the impression that the GDR rulers have an increasing influence on the Kremlin clique.[8]

The Soviet Communist party has not succeeded in really changing Russian culture. It has not remade Soviet society in its own image. Russia remains a disorganized country. Discipline does not seem to be the dominant trait of the Russian or Soviet character. The military parades in Red Square can give the wrong impression. They represent an ultimate effort at organization. In the provinces and large cities of the countryside military columns are extremely disorganized. Soldiers are seen distractedly gazing after the girls and even waving. This wouldn't even be tolerated in a battalion of the Netherlands. In Russia, there exists a salutary tension between the Communist-bureaucratic culture and the civic culture. Because intelligent individuals are repulsed by discipline and subordination, it is not surprising that the mediocre rise to the top of the various Soviet organizations.

The USSR has desperately tried to cultivate a disciplined way of life, in the German mold, so to speak. Periods of Germanization are a constant historical theme in Russia. The Kremlin apes the GDR as the Russian nobility caricatured the Prussian aristocracy. The aristocracy at the time of the tzars was Germanized, even if this Germanization did not preclude the use of spoken French. Catherine II was German, but she was not the only one of her kind during this era.

Moscow might be compared to East Berlin, but it is in the Russian provinces that discipline dissolves.

The Russian People: The Unknown Element

Brezhnev and his colleagues might truly perceive the crisis of the Soviet economy and the inegalitarian character of their society, as well as the social-justice and economic superiority of the West. But it cannot be asserted that they are capable of an accurate assessment of needed reforms and their possible consequences.

Undoubtedly, they have a fairly clear idea of the likely consequences which would follow certain reforms. They know that the decentralization of the economy would sharpen differences between Moscow and the republics. They also undoubtedly realize that a development of private consumption would imply the expansion of the free sector of the economy and give rise to inflation.

On all levels, centrifugal forces are easy to analyze. What cannot be foreseen by the Soviet rulers, as well as by foreign analysts, is the reaction of the people to a change in the economy and ideology. Would the Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Moslems, and Armenians restrain themselves or rebel?

Since the 1930s, the people are the great question mark in Soviet history. Ignorance of this factor is for us Westerners only an additional frustration. For the Soviet rulers, it constitutes the central political problem. They cannot foresee the social and political consequences of necessary economic reforms. When in doubt, they will hold back. It is better to postpone the solution to a problem than to take action and expose oneself to unpleasant surprises.

Since Stalin established his system, the Russian people have never had the opportunity to express themselves, with the exception of peasant resistance to collectivization. Soviet elections have become

no more than administrative formalities. There are opinion polls, but they serve no purpose in a totalitarian system.

The Soviet Union, in the 1930s, was one of the first countries to experiment with surveys. But in a country where each pollster must, *a priori,* be considered a KGB agent, particularly accurate results cannot be expected. Even in a liberal country such as France, 20 percent of the Communist voters do not dare tell pollsters their real political preference, usually classifying themselves as socialists or "leaning toward the Left." *A fortiori,* an accurate political poll is impossible in a police state like the Soviet Union.

Moreover, the polling itself can have a real eye-opening effect in such circumstances. An accurate survey necessitates interviewing between 1,500 to 2,000 people in the USSR, as it does in France or the United States. If different people are interviewed each time, a hundred polls would necessitate questioning between 150,000 to 200,000 people. Even for higher-ups, these inquiries might prove to be too dangerous. Responding to a questionnaire means responding to certain choices.

Do you find Leonid Brezhnev's policies
a) very satisfactory?
b) satisfactory?
c) unsatisfactory?
d) execrable?

Do you like Stalin
a) a little?
b) a lot?
c) madly?
d) not at all?

Do you think that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is
a) a good thing?
b) a necessary evil?
c) disguised fascism?

Do you think that industry should
a) keep its present organization?
b) be reformed in the manner of Hungary?
c) be reformed in the manner of Yugoslavia?
d) return to capitalism?

Do you think that the KGB should be
a) strengthened?
b) suppressed?
c) kept the same as it is?

Several polls taken in the People's Democracies have been published, dealing principally with the popular views of social stratification.[9] We should not be surprised at the results. Those interviewed placed party functionaries and industrial workers at the height of the social scale. In fact, according to the reports coming out of the People's Democracies, the workers are considered *less* privileged than farmers. In Czechoslovakia, the expression *as stupid as a worker* has made its appearance. This is rather curious for those who are accustomed to thinking of the farmers as *bumpkins.*

To keep abreast of the masses, the Soviet oligarchy almost exclusively relies on police reports, as did the nineteenth-century ruling classes in Europe before the establishment of universal suffrage. This ignorance of the people's state of mind renders any political or economic change highly risky. We must not see the Kremlin's refusal to reform as a manifestation of utter stupidity. There are good reasons for this hesitation.

To a certain extent, *structurally induced stupidity* does explain Communist systems. It manifests itself in the rulers' extreme ignorance of the mass state of mind. When certain reforms are attempted, serious miscalculations become readily apparent. Communist rulers gave ample evidence of their shortsightedness under Khrushchev, when the policy of de-Stalinization produced certain problems in Hungary, and in Poland under Gomulka, when a sharp rise in prices unleashed bloody demonstrations in 1970. Whenever the masses enter the picture, whether in Budapest, Gdansk, or Prague, the Communist rulers generally become helpless in controlling events other than by recourse to force.

Internal Fears

There is no reform of the Soviet economic system because the new class is in perpetual fear. They fear the violent uprising of the Russian people. Never has a political regime promised so much and delivered so little. Never has a political regime inflicted so much suffering on a nation.

Solzhenitsyn is reproached for his Russian nationalism, his lack of concern for other countries, and for universal values. but in his *Letter to the Leaders of the Soviet Union,* Solzhenitsyn demonstrates that of all the peoples of the world, those in the Soviet Union have suffered the most in the twentieth century. Stalin killed more Soviet citizens and his own Communist party members than Hitler. In 1976, age pyramids in the Soviet Union leave gaps, marking where generations have been decimated by Stalin's purges. The majority of Soviet citizens still remember the obliteration of relatives by the police. The resentment festering in the subconscious of the Russians against their fraudulent regime is incalculable.

To divest the regime of dogmas and myths—the dictatorship of the proletariat, centralization and planned economies, and agricultural collectivization—is to awaken a new consciousness, and to publicly admit that all the suffering has been for *nothing,* that 15, 20, or 25 million have died for the sake of an impoverished political, social, and economic system. If the Soviets ever become conscious of this fraud and discover the real nature of the new class, we will perhaps be witness to the liberation of repressed instincts on a scale unknown in the history of humanity—in response to Stalinist sadism and the hypocrisy of the Brezhnev regime. Who dares imagine the consequence of 250 million guinea pigs suddenly realizing what has been done to them?

The Soviet economy is in a crisis but the cure is worse than the disease. In response to the economic setbacks of 1963 in Czechoslovakia, economic liberalization was inaugurated in 1965, followed by large-scale political liberalization. There was no violence: the Czechs and the Slovaks have suffered infinitely less than the Russian people. However, in 1956 in Budapest, certain Communists were hung. The Hungarians were not as well disposed toward the Soviets as were the Czechs in 1968. In the USSR, there would be no external counterweight, no foreign (Red) army to protect party members, if the Soviets were to revolt.

After sixty years the Soviet people might very well be inured to suffering and not resentful. Although martyred by the Communist system, the Soviets might have emerged nonviolent from the carnage and social rupture of Marxism-Leninism. The image of the bloodbath must by now have lost much of its novelty, and, consequently, its attractiveness.

Viewed from Paris, it is impossible to assess the political tempera-

ment of the Soviet people. It is important to understand that Moscow is, indisputably, in no position to assess this matter. The Kremlin does not know the people and does not consider itself able to anticipate their reactions. If Russian political science existed, it would have to be predicated on the idea of the unconscious. One simply does not know what path liberation from the current repressive political culture would take.

Uncertain, the privileged class behaves as if the people were dangerous. A bad conscience, which is quite understandable, a curious feeling of social culpability, explains this fear of the people. The inertia of the rulers is not so much related to actual popular opinion as to what idea the rulers have of it. The oligarchy is certainly cynical. It knows it is exploitative and fraudulent. It has substituted the *false consciousness* of the Stalinist era for the *bad conscience* of the Brezhnev era.

1930–1962: false consciousness; the people are manipulated under the pretext of transforming them.

1962–1976: bad conscience; the people are feared.

The refusal of Brezhnev and his colleagues to significantly reform the economy and liberalize the regime is a sign of prudence and mediocrity. There is no sign of fanaticism. If the present Soviet economy is irrational, the political system is completely rational. This rationality is, for the time being, founded on fear.

The New Class Takes Advice from No One

In his *Letter to the Leaders of the Soviet Union,* Solzhenitsyn takes it for granted that Brezhnev and his colleagues are basically unaware of things, and that they believe in Marxism-Leninism. Given this understanding, he gives them some very reasonable advice on how to reform.[10] But perhaps he is wrong in thinking the Soviet rulers benighted. Does he not perceive the situation in which Soviet society finds itself as having more possibilities than it actually does? Solzhenitsyn thinks that ideology no longer plays a role in the Soviet system. Perhaps this view too is false. Marxism has a destabilizing effect, while Leninism seeks to buttress the system. The whole litany

of Marxist-Leninist doctrine obscures reality and impedes the emergence of political consciousness. Solzhenitsyn underestimates the people as a factor in the social situation of the Soviet Union. In any case, the rulers seem to be much more aware than certain intellectuals of the threat that this repressed people, who have been literate for sixty years now, represents.

Hypothesis: the oligarchs are more clear-sighted than the Soviet dissidents. Trips to Western countries have opened their minds. The clandestine culture of the oligarchy is richer and "freer" from the taboos in Soviet society than is samizdat.

However, the new Soviet class is a *prisoner* of its own system. It is afraid economic reforms will spark an explosion.

It knows that collectivization is a decisive factor in the stagnation of the Soviet economy. But it cannot decollectivize, retreat, or abandon this "victory" of socialism.

The administration of the economy can no longer be decentralized without destabilizing the system, without liberating centrifugal forces in the non-Russian republics and among the various nationalities.

Mass consumption would bring in its wake an unsettling of demotic beliefs and a massive growth of the black market.

The new class operates under the idea that it cannot decollectivize or increase the level of consumption without placing their own power, and perhaps their very lives, in jeopardy.

The New Class Is Very Cohesive

If the idea that the Communist rulers are governed by their ideology is abandoned, then so must an idea that frequently appears in works on the social structure of Communist countries—that there is a latent conflict between *reform-minded technocrats* and *conservative-minded apparatchiki.* If the apparatchiki do not take Marxism-Leninism seriously, there is no reason to think that the technocrats do. They both belong to the upper strata of a vast bureaucratic organization. Compared to the mass of workers, they both are privileged. When we recognize that members of the Soviet Communist party are not subject to a congenital form of imbecility, we see that nothing distinguishes them from ordinary bureaucrats.

Latent conflict no more exists between the apparatchiki of the central administration and technicians in industrial enterprises than between the French government and Régie Renault. Having understood this, it is perfectly reasonable that there are some economists and extremely capable individuals—Liberman and Kantorovitch in the USSR, Otis Dik in Czechoslovakia, and Istvan Friss in Hungary —who propose reforms. It is also natural that these reforms are accepted in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and rejected in the USSR. Personnel of the Soviet central government must consider noneconomic imperatives. All interpretations based on the existence of a necessary and profound conflict between technocrats and apparatchiki appear dubious.

Today, the ruling classes of the USSR, the upper two percent of the regime, form an extremely coherent caste. The low incidence of defection to the West by high Soviet functionaries gives credence to this. With the purges ended, the new class became politically conscious of their position. The number of traitors from among them has probably declined significantly. The privileged classes will be henceforth completely at ease in the USSR.

The impenetrability of the *class* and its transformation into a caste is the main cause of its cohesion. Until now, economic expansion automatically assured promotions and social mobility for many unprivileged youths—sons of technicians, workers, and, to a lesser extent, peasants. Economic expansion preserved the privileges of the upper bureaucratic class, and at the same time paved the way for assimilating others into new positions of privilege. The son of an apparatchiki inherited the social position of his parents, but this patrimony did not prevent the rise of new individuals.

The present economic stagnation renders the hereditary transmission of privilege and upward mobility incompatible. In the future, the number of available positions will be limited. In practice, the inheritance of official positions has been winning out over mobility. This is why we hear more and more rumors concerning the "sham" of examinations in Soviet universities. These exams no longer facilitate the advancement of students based on merit but rather favor those of the privileged classes. However, the absence of exams, competition, and other selective processes would allow political connections to completely dominate. In fact, this has already occurred. The elites are guaranteed a monopoly on privilege. Given zero eco-

nomic growth and the sham character of university examinations, the society is entering a phase where the absolute entrenchment of elites is the order of the day. The new class has closed off points of access. Nepotism will soon be the dominant feature of the Soviet social system, as it is in all stationary societies.

In the coming years, the myth of the "200 families" will become a reality in the USSR. The cohesion of the state bureaucracy will soon be solidified by blood links. As an outgrowth of this typically Asian mode of production, the new class will rediscover the traditions of ancient India and ancient China. The importance of parentage will increase in proportion to the decline in economic growth.

Conscious Conservatism

For the moment, Brezhnev and his colleagues prefer inertia to adventure. The elements of the status quo policy pursued in the Soviet Union are the following: a) maintaining the dictatorship of the proletariat; b) maintaining collectivism; c) maintaining centralized planning; d) massive arm production at the expense of mass consumption to assure the equilibrium of the centralized economic machinery and to forestall any disturbance of mass attitudes.

It is more reasonable to attribute the Kremlin's caution in foreign and domestic policy to an awareness of its extreme social and economic vulnerability rather than to structurally induced stupidity in the bureaucratic framework inherited from Lenin. It is true that Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin are not particularly bright, but is Gerald Ford so noteworthy for his intelligence?

As far as being informed is concerned, the Soviet rulers have an advantage. They know the capitalist system infinitely better than we do the Soviet system. Theories based on a view of the apparatchiki as obtuse, ideological and misinformed reflect certain prejudices. The intelligence of Russian "Communists" and the strength of the Soviet economy must be accurately assessed *without overestimating or underestimating* its true character. In the present context of our information, it would be imprudent to give hard and fast answers. Yet, it is certain that *current theories underestimate the leaders of the Soviet Union and grossly overestimate the economic and perhaps even the military power of that country.*

From Communism to Fascism

We have described men who are no longer prisoners of their official ideology, who are prudent individuals, though perhaps not too intelligent, and rather conservative in temperament. This image of a placid new Soviet class is perhaps not the whole picture. Discarding Marxism does not mean all the assorted prejudices go with it. There is still an ideology which, in large measure, conditions the attitudes of the new ruling class in the Soviet Union. It consists of two elements: the belief in the validity of the dictatorship; and nationalism.

The rulers of the USSR have confidence in the capacity of the traditional police system to assure the stability of the regime. When it is a question of repression, the Soviet Communists feel no compunction. Their police system is one of the oldest and the most stable. If feelings of inferiority arise from the state of the economy and social equity, they quite rightly feel themselves superior in regard to the relative stability of their government to others. It would not be off the mark to consider the Russian bureaucratic core as motivated by a resolutely fascist mentality and scorn for all democratic procedures. The oligarchs believe their system is the most stable because it is the most dictatorial. When they contemplate the fate of Nixon, washed away by Watergate, when they see turnovers of administrations, when the KGB informs them of the strife in Western armies, Brezhnev and his colleagues in the Politburo most likely see signs of political decrepitude, not unlike the Right in the West. However, a non-Marxist but leftist analysis perceives these manifestations of turmoil as expressions of the West's social and economic vitality.

Solzhenitsyn has certain opinions which are shockingly *authoritarian.* Doesn't he go a little too far with his "anti-Communism"? Doesn't he seem a little "fascist" in his more extrême statements? This is at least what certain men on the Left claim, after having duly saluted his "courage" and "talent." His positions on the war in Viet Nam, Chile, and Watergate strike us as antidemocratic. But indifference to democracy and the militaristic conception of power are typically Soviet attitudes. For the Russians, a dictatorship is strong whether it is of the "Left" or the "Right"; a democracy is weak. In a certain sense, *Solzhenitsyn sees the West in the same way as*

Brezhnev. It may be rich and economically dynamic, but it is politically weak. Solzhenitsyn believes that only strong regimes can resist the strong Soviet regime. This is the view of the Western world that explains the aggressiveness of Soviet foreign policy better than any dogma on the inevitable triumph of Marxism-Leninism. Properly understood, Solzhenitsyn's perspective shows that *Brezhnev has purely fascist instincts.*

Soviet leaders have a horror of Marxism and its perennial call for class struggle. On the other hand, they are quite amenable to Leninism. Leninism speaks for the elite and the vanguard of the party. It depicts dictatorship as both desirable and necessary. What are the three great achievements of the three great men of Bolshevism? Each had his own predilection. For Lenin, it was the party; for Trotsky, the army; and for Stalin, the police. These are the three pillars of every fascist regime. These are the three pillars of the present Soviet regime.

However, the intensity of repression in the USSR indicates that the rulers are conscious of the increasing instability which potentially threatens their system.

External Fears

The mentality of the Soviet rulers is also marked by nationalism, born of humiliation. Communism has made Russia a backward country, ridiculed by the West, its satellites, and the colonized peoples within its system. The abandonment of Marxism does not signify any love for the West. For the Kremlin, nationalism is not merely a means to manipulate the Soviet masses. It imbues the very heart of the average apparatchik.

The nationalism of the Soviet rulers is complicated by a number of phobias. Antisemitism is now at the forefront of Soviet policy. It motivates much of the political action (or inaction) in the Soviet Union. The hatred of the Jews is quite widespread and visceral and is seemingly shared by the apparatchiki. All Russian leaders since the time of Stalin have displayed their personal animosities toward the Jews in discussions with European Communists.

Khrushchev is reported to have said of the Jews: *"They dislike collective labor or group discipline. . . . They are individualists. . . . They are busybodies, who like to examine and discuss everything,*

and in the end they come to profoundly divergent opinions."[11] This remark is interesting because it illustrates an identification of Jewish culture with democratic culture. The same connection is drawn by Hitler in his writings. This judgment on the Jews by the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union actually gives a fairly flattering picture of Westerners. Khrushchev seems to blame Jews for having Western values. The quote confirms the impression that the Soviets have an instinctively fascist view of democracy. In other words, the Soviet rulers are instinctively repelled by debate and democratic decision making.

The antisemitism of Kosygin is not as blatant. Yet, he showed his true colors in the last discussions with the Czechs prior to the Soviet invasion of 1968. He then insulted Frantisek Kriegel, a member of the presidium of the Czechoslovakian party, by asking: *What is this Jew from Galicia doing here?* Kriegel began to answer but Kosygin quickly told him to *shut up.* This anecdote, reported by *the New York Times,* is probably a good example of how Soviet leaders conduct themselves.[12]

After the Jews, *Germany is the chief enemy.* The memories of the Second World War are rekindled by the Russian's sense of inferiority before Germany, which has all the economic strength of a Western country. The Federal Republic of Germany by far exceeds Eastern Europe in exports to the West. In private conversations with Western statesmen, Brezhnev and Kosygin still reveal an obsession with the German question, although this may not appear in their public discourses. Harold Wilson noted this in a history of his administration.[13] Wilson was used as a liaison between the United States and the USSR when he was in Moscow during the Viet Nam problem. Very often, Brezhnev and Kosygin evinced more interest in the *German problem* than in the war in Viet Nam.

The Soviet leaders are not exempt from prejudices, but there is a certain logic to their delusions. Their hatred of the Jews is connected to their horror of democracy. Their fear of capitalism revives their hatred of Germany.

The new class has developed a coherent ideology. It is more Nazi than fascist, inasmuch as it combines antisemitism with authoritarianism, scorn for democratic politics, and for the people in general. The Kremlin is fairly well informed, and the bureaucracy cannot be accused of political stupidity. However, it can be criticized for its proclivities, which are more and more clearly fascist in nature.

Yet, is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union right when it thinks that the dictatorship is completely stable? Is fascism really "rational"? In any given moment, the equilibrium of the Soviet political system depends on two things—mass attitudes, and police effectiveness.

Today, the attitudes of the Soviet people are as inadequatley known as were those of the peasants in the Old Regime. Yet, mass dissatisfaction can be sensed and proven as well as wide-spread volatility in the countries that constitute the Soviet sphere. We must realize that a revolution of minds is taking place. The Russian people are slowly developing a character of their own.

Chapter 7

DESPAIR AND SOCIAL DEVIANCE

Is it possible to determine the degree of suffering and frustration that accompanies industrialization in a given society? Or, more generally, is it possible to measure the happiness of a given group of people?

In the West, we have opinion polls which roughly measure the level of satisfaction of the various European peoples under capitalism. A study of various nations has shown that Britain has the largest percentage of satisfied and very satisfied people in all of the European Economic Community (EEC). The main reason lies in the fact that the English, Irish, and Scottish peoples have abandoned the Puritan and Victorian work ethic, though it has had disastrous consequences for the national economy. But they do seem to have found a cure to worker alienation. It does not lie in the collective ownership of the means of production or in the abolition of the wage-earning class. It lies in something much more obvious—the abolition, or curtailment, of work. An attitude against producing for production's sake has won the day. The British working class demanded and obtained the *right to take things easy.* Its ruling classes had set the example for the general pursuit of happiness. Great Britain is becoming the poorest but the happiest country in Western Europe. As a consequence of this new attitude, the suicide rate has plummeted from 12 per 100,000 in 1963 to 8 per 100,000 in 1970. England, Ireland, and Scotland are the only nations in Europe where suicides have decreased in the last ten years.

There is a clear correlation between the percentage of those who register satisfaction in opinion polls and the number of suicides. The number of suicides is inversely proportional to the number of satisfied people. From the suicide rate, we can derive an index of unhappiness in a given country and inversely calculate satisfaction.

We may not have opinion polls registering popular satisfaction in Communist regimes, but we do have for each *People's Democracy,* except Rumania, a rate of suicide periodically entered into the *Annual Demographic Statistics* of the UN. Cautious, miserable, and Stalinistic, the USSR does not publish either suicides or homocides. Rumania *mixes together* suicides, homocides, and accidental deaths in a single useless category.

Why would anyone commit suicide? People commit suicide when the material and moral conditions of life no longer seem to sustain them and no hope for change is in sight. Above all, suicide must not be seen as an intellectual response to insolvable existential anxieties. For example, in France, the rate of suicide is about average with other European countries (15/100,000). Those who commit suicide are mostly from among agricultural *wage-earners, manual laborers,* and *the old.* It is those who are expendable in a consumer society who commit suicide. The extent of material and moral impoverishment in the exploited classes is key in affecting the rate of suicide over a given period. And what is the rate of suicide in Hungary?

Hungary—The Happiest Outpost in the Camp

The suicide rate is traditionally high in Central Europe. However, since the installation of Communism this region has broken all world records. In Hungary, presently the world's leader in suicides, the annual rate for 100,000 inhabitants increased 75 percent in 15 years, ranging from 20 in 1955 to 36 in 1970. Next to the Hungarians, the Swedes are real amateurs (22 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1970).

This increase in death by suicide is not confined to Hungary alone. The average rate of suicide in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria ranges from 14 to 21 per 100,000 between 1965 and 1970. If the GDR is included with these four other countries, the

average rate of suicide in the People's Democracies is about 23 per 100,000 in 1970.

Western Europe appears stable by comparison. During the same period (1965–70), the average rate of suicide in the EEC, Austria, and Switzerland, ranged from 12.5 to 14 per 100,000, which figures to an increase of only 11 percent in five years.

But in Western Europe, the harshest effects of industrialization were over by 1955. The disintegration of traditional communities, atomization, tuberculosis, and depressed wages, which resulted from intense capital investment, were only distant memories by 1965. The suffering that accompanied the establishment of an industrial infrastructure in the nineteenth century had long since disappeared in Western Europe.

Great Britain, France, Prussia, Belgium, Austria, and Bavaria were all countries which passed through either partial or complete industrialization in the nineteenth century. Durkheim had observed there a significantly higher suicide rate during the period of industrialization in the middle of the last century. *But this rate is much lower than the present rate in the People's Democracies.* The average rate for this group of Western countries ranged from 9.5 per 100,000 in 1871–75, to 10 per 100,000 in 1874–78, and 11.5 per 100,000 in 1877–81. This represents a 5 percent increase in five years and a 21 percent increase over ten years. This must be compared to the 52 percent increase over five years in the People's Democracies to the record average of 23 per 100,000 inhabitants that they have recently reached. Industrialization in the West during the nineteenth century appears to have been a real party compared to what is presently endured by the satellites of the USSR.

Sick Societies

Communist societies are disintegrating, and an increasing number of people are losing all hope and putting an end to their lives. These are sick societies. It is inconceivable how societies claiming to have done away with human alienation *dare* publish such shocking suicide statistics. The USSR at least has the prudence to withhold from the United Nations mortality statistics listing the cause of death. But other sources of information show that the Soviet society is equally

a world of despair. There are probably many suicides in the Soviet Union. Otherwise, why would the USSR have such a strange law depriving widows of their husbands' pensions when they willfully take their own lives?[14]

The other forms of individual self-destruction are well known in Soviet Russia. The men in Communist Russia are frequently alcoholics. Eyewitnesses unanimously agree that alcoholism is becoming a major problem in the Soviet Union. Vomitoriums exist everywhere, places where the police can drag drunkards who cannot find their way home.[15] Present-day alcoholism in Russia cannot be traced to tradition and the cold climate of the USSR. It is essentially tied to the Soviet social system.[16]

Gyorgy Konrad, a Hungarian writer and sociologist, describes in his novel, *The Visitor* (1969), the coming to political awareness of a social worker confronted by the misery in the worker's section of Pest. Alcoholism, suicide, prostitution, and the socially disadvantaged are not the exclusive domain of the West. State socialism is no answer to the social worker's case load.

Why is there despair in advanced Communist regimes? We are speaking of despair on a mass scale. Only a mass despair could lead to a massive alcohol problem and a suicide rate of 30 per 100,000 a year. The data we can find in the new demographic literature of Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia do show that in Eastern, as it is in Western, Europe suicide is not committed by adolescents and tormented intellectuals. But the social categories employed by professional social workers and statisticians in Communist countries are more "Marxist" and consequently less "precise" and "discriminating" than those used by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies. They are content to distinguish between people engaged in physical and mental labor. But the more specific category of "manual labor" does not appear. Unlike in capitalist countries, it is uncertain in Communist countries whether the most disadvantaged of the work force find their situation extremely intolerable. As with Durkheim, who described the social turmoil of the second half of the nineteenth century, his Hungarian successors use statistics in such a way to, as far as possible, play down the differences among social categories. This is not hypocrisy or intellectual dishonesty on their part. In a classless society, the rate of suicide should not be expected to deviate greatly according to social category.[17]

Is this malaise a feature of "advanced" Communist countries

only? We do not, *as yet,* have sufficient evidence for China, Viet Nam, or Cuba.

Communism Is Contrary to Human Nature

In theory, the Communist system is perfect. Nevertheless, it is manifestly clear to the masses—by the total absence of material goods and the absence of the most elementary liberties—that their lives are lacking. Despite the fact that their dissatisfaction is presented to them as the *nec plus ultra* of happiness, inhabitants of Communist countries are frequently motivated by the desire to drown their despair in alcohol.

Durkheim has effectively shown that the suicide rate drops in revolutionary times, when men take their own destiny in hand and create history. Until now, no modern society has successfully done away with inequality. But the struggle for dignity, even if fruitless, gives to the more politically aware among the exploited raison d'etre.

In perfect conformity to Durkheim's model, the rate of suicide in Hungary fell to its nadir in 1956, during the revolution.[18]

Struggle itself creates solidarity among the working class and restores wholeness to atomized men. The act of revolution *implies* overcoming alienation. But the Soviets do not have the right to act, to create, or do anything meaningful. The regime turns citizens into passive individuals and inert objects. Soviet Communism dissolves the human personality insofar as it denies men the right to be conscious of their individual dissatisfaction. Communism represses in both the Freudian and political sense of the word.

While certain organizations in Western societies may be designated as totalitarian and encourage self-destruction, this applies to Communist societies as a whole. The rates of suicide are always high in the army and in prisons. But in the West, this reflects the despair of free individuals who refuse to adapt to confinement. In the Communist system, it is as individuals enslaved *at birth* in a totalitarian system that they refuse to adapt. It is a fundamental law of social psychology that totalitarianism produces social deviance. The rebels described by Orwell and Zamyatin are real people. Unless we lobotomize the entire population, as Zamyatin suggests, totalitarianism will never be totally successful. Orwell shows that even alcohol would be ineffective in securing the adaption of the masses to the regime.

These rather sinister reflections are in fact reassuring. The Communist experience shows that liberty is a fundamental human need and that men are not infinitely maleable. After Hitler and Stalin, this could be doubted. Francois Fejto's history of the People's Democracies reaches similar conclusions. The errors and failures of Communism result from *"a fundamental ideological error, a monstrous misunderstanding of the nature of man. . . ."*[19]

The uprisings in Berlin, Gdansk, Poznan, and Budapest, as well as the peasant resistance to collectivization, correspond to prison suicides in our country insofar as they bespeak the refusal to adapt on the part of individuals who know an alternative.

In 1976, the long hair of Soviet youths, the suicide rate, the low agricultural and worker productivity, and alcoholism itself represent so many refusals and manifestations of the indomitability of human nature, independent of the efforts at socialization on the part of totalitarian regimes. Men and women born into this system manifest their revolt in disparate and badly articulated ways. They are leading totalitarianism toward an economic breakdown.

Confining dissidents in psychiatric hospitals and subjecting them to crude medication or electric shock treatment are not signs of madness on the part of the Kremlin or the KGB. The political use of psychiatry by the Soviets can be seen as the beginning of self-recognition, a final experiment on the maleability of human nature. The present attitude of Soviet leaders is a considerable advancement from the era when the existence of mental illness in a Socialist regime was denied. Their response to the acknowledged variety of human types is obviously fascist, but it is one step closer to an understanding of the nature of their social system.

The economic and social inferiority of the system is obvious to the Soviet oligarchy. The upper reaches of the apparatchiki understand fairly well that their social and economic system leads to stagnation. But as yet, they do not seem to have discovered the ultimate reason of their error, the fundamental psychological root of the human resistance to Communism: the need to be free.

Are We Witnessing the End of Passivity?

We must not have any illusions. The general and predominating trait of the present Russian mentality seems to be apathy. The Soviet

citizen is sorely deprived and clearly exploited, yet he doesn't seem the least bit motivated to revolt. In 1970, Amalrik wrote in *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* that the dominant state of mind in the USSR was passive discontent.

> This discontent is not directed against the regime as a whole. Simply put, the majority of the people do not ask questions, or even consider that there could be an alternative. The discontent is directed against certain particular features of the regime, which are nonetheless necessary conditions of its existence. For example, the workers are put off by their situation. They have no rights in the administration of the factory or the kolkhozes, being totally dependent on the director (who, in turn, is dependent on the decisions of the district). Everyone is put off by the gross inequality of wealth, low salaries, the conditions of daily life, the insufficiency of elementary goods, the confinement to a given dwelling place and a given job, etc. This discontent is beginning to manifest itself more and more openly now, and many are beginning to reflect: who exactly is to blame for all this?[20]

We should not let ourselves be lulled by the stability which has marked Soviet rule since 1929. Indeed, there has been forty-five years of passivity. It might be said that *if the Russian people are still in the dark after all this time, they will never understand the way things really are.* Such reasoning, however, is flawed. Class consciousness and the awareness of oppression builds slowly. There was a time lag of about a century (1790–1890) between the beginning of the English industrial revolution and the emergence of a workers' party. Between the first appearance of the French bourgeoisie and 1789, there were several centuries.

The standard of living in the Soviet Union has leveled off. Yet, there are some indications of greater expectations and a will to change things. One indication is the rapid drop in the birth rate, which declined from 29.6 percent in 1955 to 17.7 percent in 1973. In Russia itself, the birth rate fell from 23 percent to 14.5 percent between 1960 and 1970. This is an extreme drop, reflecting a revolution in mass attitudes. "History" shows that demands for material betterment and social change are either preceeded, followed, or accompanied by a drop in births. Conversely, a clear sign of the passivity which marks the masses of the Third World is a consistently high birth rate. To assess a change in attitudes, indirect indications must be relied upon, for lack of opinion polls.

Because the Pill is not available in Russia, the people are paying a high price for this drop in the birth rate. Students in the provincial cities, who would be most in need of the pill, must use other meth-

ods. Birth control techniques are traditional (coitus interruptus, marking temperature variations in the woman, prophylactics, and abortions). Toleration of these significant inconveniences, willingly embraced and constantly repeated, bespeaks a highly sophisticated attitude and affirms the desire for change. The Russian people are no longer a mass of Muzhiks, flung about in the storm of Stalinism. On occasion they rebel, but in a disorganized and ineffectual way. There is a desire for material betterment on the part of the masses which is not expressed politically and thus manages to escape the total control of the State. The state planners are already disturbed about the future availability of manpower. In silence, but on a large scale, the Russians have stopped producing babies, just like the French Socialists from 1880 to 1900; and in contrast to the sharp rise in the birth rate that took place in Hitler's Germany as Nazi dreams of grandeur were implicitly accepted. As much as one can tell, the birth rate was maintained at high levels under Stalin, remaining stable at about 25 per thousand between 1950 and 1960. The beginning of its decline coincided with the ouster of Khrushchev. Therefore, it is a recent pnenomenon, contemporary with the Brezhnev-Kosygin era.

The long hair of the young proletariats, alcoholism, and the spontaneous demonstrations against inadequate food supplies and material deprivations suffered by the workers of Ivanovo, Sverdlovsk, and Gorky (1970) are the real threats to the regime, much more than the opposition on moral grounds from the intelligentsia.[21] Western secret services should make a special effort to analyze the social movements that will likely spread in Russia in the years to come. They should also publish the results of their studies.

A Rational People

The dissatisfaction of the Soviet masses takes many forms, all disparate and badly articulated: the low productivity of labor, alcoholism, suicide, racist behavior, an increasing interest in religion, long hair, vagrancy, and juvenile delinquency. For now, the regime is not threatened. This type of behavior will not, in and of itself, necessitate pragmatic reform. Nevertheless, it is very unsettling. The low birth rate demonstrates that the attitude of the populace is not regressive, that *rational behavior is generally winning out.* The

Soviet populace is not in the process of regressing toward the primitive mentality that characterized preindustrial times, despite the impression that Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, and Amalrik give in their books when they speak of the moral decrepitude of Soviet society.

The relaxation of contemporary morals is a perfectly normal phenomenon and a sign of a prereformist or prerevolutionary mentality.[22]

In Western Europe, the industrial revolution was accompanied by a massive outbreak of alcoholism and a marked rise in the suicide rate. Beginning in 1840–60, disorder progressively gave way to rebellion. Alcoholism dropped, the suicide rate stabilized, and the socialist parties began a lightning-like rise. The Soviet leaders should reflect on this eminently Marxist phenomenon.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the English worker was a great drinker, an anti-Irish racist, and generally without morals. At the same time, he was imbued with a religious fervor such as inspires Methodism. Each of these traits of the English worker of prereformist times has its equivalent in the Russian worker of today. Unfortunately, Soviet intellectuals lack certain points of reference and hardly see the wave of popular discontent residing beneath the froth of amorality.

Ivan the Terrible and His Petty Bourgeois

Today the Soviet Union is a world of social deviance. Whole strata of society, at an ever-increasing rate, turn away from the objectives and norms of Communist rule and its official collectivist, puritanical, and war-oriented ideology.

This balking at collectivization is evidenced in the innumerable anecdotes reported in doleful terms by the regime's journalists:

A young man enters a store holding the hand of an old lady, who is greeted by the store owner:

"Hello, grandma."

"I am only the grandmother of my grandchildren."

The message is clear. At this point in time, the Soviet people are developing what Communists would call "petty-bourgeois individualism on a mass scale," if indeed their jargon were ever to describe actual phenomena. This grandmother is deviant, as far as the objec-

tives of the Soviet state are concerned. But if we consider the norm as the average attitude of the average Soviet, then she is perfectly normal.

A methodological problem arises. The more seemingly inconsequential the deviance in Russia, the more pervasive and less visible it is. The following list categorizes deviance in Soviet society by decreasing order of visibility and increasing order of importance:

1) *Political men and intellectuals*—a fringe group, well known to Westerners (Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, Amalrik, Plyushch), their endeavors affect very few.
2) *Mass deviance among minors*—the young and the recalcitrant (long hair, alcoholism, religion).
3) *Mass deviance among adults*—(low worker productivity, economic fraud, birth control).

We often hear the USSR described as a modern "old Russia," where Brezhnev plays the role of a new tsar, and the workers that of new Muzhiks. Following this metaphor through, the Soviet rulers have inherited the expansionist goals of tsarism as well as willfully manipulating the masses.

Critique

1. *Brezhnev as supertsar?* Certainly. The logic behind Soviet expansion is not exactly that of tsarist Russia but the style of rule exhibited by the current Communist leaders—authoritarianism, scorn for the masses, a lack of social awareness, and the taste for military pomp—is strongly reminiscent of Ivan the Terrible.

2. *240 million serfs?* No. Serfs do not practice birth control. The era of the Muzhik is over. Seen from a Western perspective, the USSR appears as a great barbarous power. But this is an image we impose on its rulers. The Russian people are infinitely more Western in their tastes and behavior than their leaders.

Soviet Communism is often presented as the more or less accidental by-product of the "Russian soul." Schumpeter, for example, writes: *"The trouble with Russia is not that it is socialist. It is because it is Russia."*

In 1949, Geoffrey Gorer, a "cultural" anthropologist, tried in a somewhat unconvincing manner to distill Russia into something Dostoevskian—like the climate, it vacillates between two violently opposed states, one of enthusiasm and fury and the other of abjectness and resignation.[23] In animated terms, Gorer describes the capacity of the Russian character to submit to authority. He quotes Dostoevski who wrote: *"The Russian nation represents a new and astonishing phenomenon in the annals of human history. The character of its people differs so markedly from other Europeans that its neighbors are unable to understand them."* Russia is unique and barbarous, and so is its brand of Communism.

In 1913 or even 1917, Russia was probably more agricultural than barbarous. Too frequently, we are quick to take "rural" traits for essential characteristics of an elusive "Russian soul." Our Vendean sorcerers of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries were and are no more noteworthy for their rationalism.* It was the Russian "elites" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries who gave us our vision of the Russian soul. Perhaps they were right, but it's not certain. Recent historiography is growing more and more skeptical of the opinions of the privileged classes regarding the peasants. They consistently tended to see them as curious and, sometimes, furious beasts. Whatever defines the Russian soul, the Dostoevskian elements in the Russian people are now dead. The birth rate in the whole Soviet Union has declined from 25 per 1000 in 1913 to 17 per 1000 in 1973. Rationality has set in.

It is not so certain that the elites have progressed beyond the people in terms of civilization. If there is something barbarous in the USSR, this something is lodged in the ruling class, today as it was in 1900. Communism can be hated without hating the Russian people, who have played their role in history honorably. Their history sufficiently shows that they are not—congenitally or culturally—the most odious people on earth. They brought down tsarism, and fought against collectivization in 1929 and in subsequent years with both courage and obstinacy. The French are particularly ill suited to give lessons about political independence to the Russian people. Peasant resistance to Stalin was certainly more determined than French resistance to the Germans.

*Vendée—coastal department of Western France with a large rural population and few towns. The peasant populace has been traditionally viewed as politically reactionary and intensely religious. —Trans.

In our agricultural country, dictatorship and centralized control is a natural social phenomenon. Its degeneration into totalitarianism depends on a type of madness unique to elites and not on the temperament of rural masses. The French peasants of the seventeenth century were unable to resist the absolute state. How could the Russian peasants resist the Bolshevik apparatus? Urbanization provides the people power because it concentrates large masses who can, to a certain extent, organize against the state machine.

Communism has certainly created a new man. However, he is not a Communist but social-democratic and petty-bourgeois in nature. The Russian people, martyred, massacred, and manipulated for sixty years, aspire to leave the social test-tube and live. To consume in peace and full employment, with or without the Communist party, as its goal.

The Stability of the Asiatic Mode of Production

Ancient India and China, and related political arrangements, such as existed in the realms of the ancient Middle East, exhibited great stability in the absence of foreign invasion. Taking our cue from these ancient models, is it possible to see the USSR as representing a Thousand-Year Reich?

The way of life in the Soviet Union must not be seen as something intrinsically unbearable. Forgetting the absence of freedom for a moment, the Soviet way of life does have some attractive features —e.g., pay is not tied to piece work, no air pollution from cars. In the USSR, as in all static societies of the preindustrial era, *"sloth has taken over."* It is only a *comparison* with the standard of living and life-style in the West that strains the Soviet system to the breaking point.

The underlying cause of the stability typical of preindustrial systems can be found in the Soviet regimes: a ubiquitous bureaucracy, relative equality as far as the more privileged masses are concerned, and the aloofness of the leaders who make of themselves inaccessible demi-gods, whose will cannot be questioned. The roots of mass apathy are present in such a situation. But the Soviets are now literate, something which was not the case with Indian, Chinese, or Assyrian peasants. What's more, orthodox Marxism, which in and of

itself generates certain tensions, is also present. Above all, there is the presence of the West.

Moreover, we should not exaggerate the solidity of Asiatic modes of production. They are far from being absolutely stable. They vacillate between a pure centralized state and fractionalized association, coming close to European forms of feudalism. The India of the Mauryans (from 321 to 185 B.C.) represents an initial and firmly founded phase of the Asiatic mode of production which was not maintained in the subsequent history of the subcontinent. From the nineteenth to the thirteenth century A.D., there was a system in Northern India which strongly resembled Western feudalism, a natural consequence of the weakening of the central state.[24]

All state bureaucracies are subject to a law of socio-political entropy which condemns them to decomposition into smaller unities. This evolution occurs slowly. The Soviet state is no exception, despite a new factor, the bureaucracy's control over modern means of communication. This new centralizing factor is more than offset by the greater complexity of tasks brought under the control of the Communist state in the economic, social, and cultural life of the country. The Soviet mode of production has much more scope than the ancient modes of Asiatic production, which did not seek to control all human activity, i.e., they were not totalitarian.*

The Soviet system reinforces this tendency toward regional decomposition with class antagonisms, rendered potentially quite virulent by Marxism, literacy, and the economic pressures from capitalism. Evidence for current fractionalism in the USSR can be seen by the burgeoning of corruption in the provinces. As in all precapitalist societies, Soviet society oscillates between state centralization and some form of feudalism.

When what the West represents finally made itself felt in China, India, and among all precapitalist economies, which survived to the nineteenth century, these systems were shook to their foundations. Isolation is key to the survival of static modes of production. The USSR came into being for the purpose of overthrowing the capitalist system. But having failed, it will not escape the consequences.

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*Comparisons cannot be drawn between the social morality elaborated by King Ashoka, the greatest of the Mauryans, and the intolerant and expanding ideology of Soviet power. The *Dhamma* emphasizes precisely the necessity for tolerance.

Chapter 8

ADAPTATION AND CRISIS

Repression was the keynote of the Twenty-Fifth Congress of the Soviet Union in 1976. Brezhnev devoted a large part of his speech making to a defense of Dzerzhinski, the founder of Cheka, which is, after all, the ancestor of the KGB.

The Soviet's repressive apparatus is complex and varied. If we exclude the army, it is mainly composed of the KGB and the militia. The KGB is in charge of the concentration camps and border patrol, as well as monitoring individuals. The role of the militia is more modest, the maintenance of public order. The KGB orchestrates the whole of repression; its controls extend over individual citizens. The militia takes care of the working masses in the street; its duties include collecting and roughing up the Saturday night drunks. They are paramilitary, or "parapolice," organizations generally recruited from the civilian population—"civilians in arms" who, in theory, perform their duties after working hours.

The duties of the police apparatus as a whole are almost innumerable. As the Communist system attempts to suppress all manifestations of human liberty, it runs into all kinds of dissidents: liberal intellectuals, abstract artists, science fiction writers who are a little indiscreet in their use of symbolism, and workers and officials who display a bit too much of the free enterprise spirit, which, in a Communist regime, takes the form of economic fraud. It is not merely sufficient to decree the end of certain liberties. The law must afterwards be executed.

In carrying out this project, the main technique of Soviet police activity is monitoring individual movement through a complex system of internal passports and visas. It is much more difficult for a Soviet citizen to move about the interior of the Soviet Union than for a Frenchman to gain entry into the United Kingdom or Federal Germany.

Treaties give the right to each citizen of France, Britain, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, or Luxemburg, to live and work in any country whatsoever of the European Economic Community. A Soviet citizen is not even assured of getting authorization to change his place of residence; the majority of such requests are in fact rebuffed. If we were only to look at the circulation of individuals, we could say that the European Community is already more integrated than the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In the USSR, the effort to control the movements of the population does not arise solely from the desire for law and order. It is also caused by the imperatives of centralized planning, which are not limited to administering things but are also concerned with the allocation of man-power. The problems of organization and control over the movements of men is immense and by itself requires a considerable expansion of police activities. This system can be condemned for moral reasons; but the economic impact should also be measured.

Police operations in the Soviet Union are perhaps five to ten times more demanding than those of the French police. The range of this coefficient (between five and ten) is determined *a priori,* and may be somewhat arbitrary. Such an estimate is preferable to none at all. The repressive apparatus of France simply cannot be considered equivalent to that in the USSR.

In France, the police and justice departments employ about one percent of the population. It is about five percent in Great Britain. If the KGB's duties require five times the amount of work, it would have to employ five times as many men as the French police, which would be about five percent of the active population. If it has ten times as much work, it would employ ten times more personnel, that is, ten percent of the active population. We are taking for granted that the efficiency of the average "KGB man" is equal to that of a French policeman, which is probably still one more overestimation of the Soviet system.

In the USSR then, five to ten percent of the active population is

employed in the nonproductive tasks of police surveillance. These percentages represent enormous amounts of man power and are not only probable, but they are also logical. We have to stand back and resist Western conceptions of the probable and the possible or, more simply, of what is normal. In fact, these percentages help explain Soviet poverty. Centralization produces disorder. The productivity of workers is low. An important part of Soviet revenue goes to armaments. However, these three factors are not sufficient to explain the astonishingly depressed standard of living in the Soviet Union. If we include the fact that five to ten workers out of 100 are drawn from the productive sectors of the economy and employed in the police, we can sufficiently grasp the reasons for Soviet poverty. Centralization, armaments, the KGB, and low productivity due to the slave status of labor dispel the mysteries of economic impoverishment. The "Soviet model" is perfectly coherent and perfectly absurd.

The Soviet army, assisted by a branch of the KGB involved in foreign affairs, undertakes repression in the People's Democracies in the form of intimidation. The satellite regimes profit from the fact that the USSR relieves them of a significant financial burden in assuming a major part of their police duties. This is why it at least appears that there are fewer policemen in Budapest than in Paris, although some deprecators claim that the majority of policmen are in plain clothes in the country of Janos Kadar. Whatever, Hungary certainly does not devote five or ten percent of its national revenue to repression. Modest appropriations for repression is a significant factor in economic growth and helps explain the relative advancement of the People's Democracies over their underdeveloped dominators.

When Brezhnev speaks with a tremulous voice of the glory of the police and of the great Dzerzhinski, he is not talking about some small administration, but about five or ten million workers, the majority of whom do not belong to the privileged sectors of society. The KGB must not be seen as a particular admistrative branch of government, but as a sector of the economy. In the USSR, there is a primary sector (mines, agriculture), a secondary sector (industry), a third sector (services), and a fourth sector (repression).

Tensions are mounting in the Soviet Union and the regime depends more than ever on the KGB. How can the lower ranks of police

personnel be rewarded for their efforts and loyal service? How is their loyalty assured? The government, mired in economic difficulties, is financially unable to raise the salaries of five to ten million workers. They can be paid only in words, praises, and medals. The KGB does not escape the realities of the Soviet economy. It is enormous and, as with the other three sectors of the economy, it is subject to financial constraint. Unable to grant privileges to all agents of repression, the system quite reasonably fears the vulnerability of petty KGB functionaries to the general change in attitudes. If the personnel grows soft, the efficiency of the KGB will progressively decline. Then, the regime cracks. This is undoubtedly the main structural weakness of the regime. Its repressive apparatus is too vast to be perfectly isolated from the populace and to be staffed only with privileged personnel. The USSR is a *police* society, not only a *police* state. Western students spending several months in a Soviet university variably report the participation of janitors and deans alike in police work and repression, as the conduits of information on the most insignificant happenings among students. In certain sectors of society, there is a certain police mentality. On these informers depends the efficiency of the police apparatus, narrowly understood. If the lower echelons of the KGB and the civilian informers are not insensible to the currents of dissatisfaction which run through Soviet society, then anything is possible.

Marketing Repression

The Russian Communists were revolutionaries before being transformed into a new class. From the subversive phase of their history they retained an intimate knowledge of the repressive techniques to which they were subjected. We can't expect the Kremlin clique to make the same mistakes as Nicholas II. The Soviet system appears to be infinitely more solid and perfect, in a totalitarian sense, than systems patterned after Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco. In opposition, Leninism is a model for coup d' etat; in power, it serves repression.

The Bolsheviks understood very well that every successful revolution depended on a *fusion* of such diverse social categories that were potentially revolutionary. To collapse any social system, the unanimity of all nonprivileged classes is necessary. The Third Estate in 1789 included the upper and lower middle class, the people in

the cities, and, from the time of the Great Fear, the peasants. Louis XVI and his nobility, so isolated, had nowhere to turn.

The Chinese Revolution was born of the flow to the countryside of workers and intellectuals who constituted the remnants of the Communist party, massacred in the towns held by Chiang Kai-shek.

All revolutions are born from the fusion of the experiences of all the classes that are potential opponents of a society. To evaluate the revolutionary potential of a given society, it is not sufficient to add up the number of discontents: exploited peasants plus exploited workers plus repressed intellectuals *does not equal* the demolishment of the system. There must be avenues of communication between the various classes. The Soviet regime has successfully implemented a strong policy of *social segmentation*. The geographical compartmentalization corresponds to a social segmentation of quite remarkable coherence. The intellectuals are alienated from the other classes of society by material advantages, reflected in their salaries and apartments. They are intellectually repressed but materially privileged. They are scorned by the proletariat. In theory, the workers are the darlings of the regime. They are the recipients of certain ideological satisfactions. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is *their* party, but they are exploited and enslaved in the factories.

In contrast to the peasants in the People's Democracies, the peasants of the USSR have no benefits, material or ideological. They are the poorest class in the Soviet Union. Since the massacres during collectivization, they have been quite rightly considered irreducibly hostile. The different treatment of the various social categories by the *state of the entire people* (so the Soviet state calls itself) is not a negligible element of the regime's stability. Various measures made frequent contact between the classes difficult. The organizing of vacations is the best example. Each factory has its own vacation camp. There are special barracks *for* writers, *for* technicians, and *for* apparatchiki. This system is also in effect in the People's Democracies. But in Hungary, Poland, or Czechoslovakia, every social category shares in anti-Sovietism, which renders the system totally ineffectual.

Soviet urban planning has also put models of social segmentation into effect that coordinate factory life and lodgings. These arrangements even surpass the suburbs in Western countries as far as homogeneous living arrangements are concerned.

In the USSR the contact between city and countryside is kept to a minimum. Today, as in 1917, the fusion of these two worlds would be a threat to the regime. The kolkhozes are off limits to city dwellers. Except for certain showcase kolkhozes near the capitals and the decollectivized kolkhozes in the Caucasian republics, employees in these enterprises are assigned residences.

The fact that the various social classes share certain behavior traits (most notably, in the area of birth control) has not yet eliminated sentiments of mistrust between them. The Soviet regime is very skilled in calculating its *choice* of *official* enemies. The economically exploited workers and peasants are quietly imprisoned, dispatched to concentration camps, and executed when they too openly express their opposition to the regime. In contrast, the regime confronts its ideological enemies in a different manner. Their opposition is based on moral and noneconomic values, the attachment to religion, liberty, and national sentiments. The regime's case is made public and presented to the masses as an example of the struggle against the *economically privileged.* Intellectuals, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaijanians are surely wealthier than the average Russian. The fact that the majority of known Soviet dissidents seem to share an instinctive horror of Marxism is of further assistance to the regime, insofar as Marxism and its analysis of economic exploitation can pierce the worker mentality and reverse the strictly poujadist,* anti-intellectual, and racist attitudes that the regime inculcates in the populace. The way in which Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov speak of the Russian people is very distressing. According to Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, history, cultural traditions, the Russian soul, contemporary moral decay, alcoholism, and anti-intellectualism are *the* concepts of social analysis. The dissident intellectuals have excellent reasons to abhore Marxism, when one sees where it has led the USSR. But it is not abstract ideals like Slavophilism, the return to our roots, and the love of freedom which are going to trigger an uprising of the Russian people in the 1970s, whose social ideal is much more social-democractic than religious. The historian Amalrik is infinitely more lucid; his picture of the current dissidents in the USSR is exceedingly depressing.

*Poujadism—political party and movement of the extreme Right during the Fourth Republic in France, mainly supported by small, economically threatened shopkeepers. More generally, the term is used to signify an intense aversion to any form of economic or technical change. —Trans.

Repression, Economics, and Sociology

In researching the quality of life in an urban setting, we should take particular note of Soviet urban planning. In fact, the urban policies of the USSR are a masterpeice of Leninism, applied to repressive ends. The Soviet Union is a centralized state of 252 million inhabitants. According to French norms, Moscow, its capital, should have nearly 40 million inhabitants. (The concentration of people in Paris amounts to 15 percent of the total French population.) But there are only 7.4 million inhabitants in the heart of the most vast country of the world. This is not very many at all, even if we include Leningrad as as second capital with its 4 million inhabitants. Paris, the capital of a small country, has 8.2 million inhabitants. New York, the main economic center of a truly federal state, which is also smaller than the USSR, has 11.5 million inhabitants. Tokyo has 11.5 million, Mexico City 10.2, Buenos Aires 8.3 and so on. The Soviet planners favor the development of cities whose population ranges between 500,000 and 1,800,000 inhabitants (there were 33 of these cities in 1975).

Shown in this is an effort to dispense concentrations of fully politicized people intent on learning the lessons of the 1917 Revolution. In Roy Medvedev's work, *On Socialist Democracy,* we find some observations on certain regulations that prevent Soviet citizens from settling in Moscow. These regulations intend that the city not become filled with a large concentration of peoples whose uncontrolled movements could threaten the stability of the rule. Lenin's and Trotsky's texts, which refer to the numerical weakness but concentration of the Soviet proletariat at the end of tsarism, haunt the rulers in the Kremlin, who retain from their Marxist past and their experiences in Central Europe an intense fear of the proletariat.* They have succeeded in bringing about a country where the mechanisms of power are centralized and the human masses decentralized. Bravo!

Obviously, there is a price to pay, economically speaking, for this prowess in matters of social repression. The constant erection of cities meant for 500,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants is very costly. Each urban region represents a small-scale economy, calling for the

*Despite their differences, the Cambodian and Vietnamese regimes of today are orthodox as far as dispersing the urban population concentration is concerned.

establishment of a great number of basic infrastructures. The economic costs are great since, on the whole, these local infrastructures —networks of communication, hospitals, and roads—are not realized. In the spring, the cities of the provinces are veritable rivers of mud. They lack stores, hospital equipment, and movie houses. We must be conscious of the socio-political reasons for the series of factories and high-rise apartments that make up the cities of the Soviet provinces. More generally, the economists who study the USSR underestimate the political considerations which impinge upon planners, adding to the complexity of tasks and economic loss.

Edward Luttwak, a British political scientist, has written a very subtle study on coups d'etat.[25] In an appendix to this work, he studies what is called the economics of repression. He shows that every underdeveloped country is faced with a fundamental dilemma over the distribution of state funds. What should be appropriated for investment to assure economic growth and the improvement of the standard of living over the long run? How much more should be appropriated for repressive purposes, the army, the police, and propaganda?

In a certain number of cases, earmarking the entire national budget for repressive purposes, leading to a stationary economy, assures the maximum amount of political stability. Luttwak gives the example of Duvallier's and Tontons Macoutes's regime in Haiti. But Soviet techniques of social control, which earmarks five to ten percent of national revenue for repression, is infinitely more sophisticated. It relies on Lenin's theories which, for once, seem truly scientific as regards repression. Because it includes a large dose of "social" repression, the Soviet reality is only partially visible. Its economic costs are not completely apparent. Efforts which should go to increasing economic productivity are sidetracked, as monies are directly raised to support the police. The KGB drains a large part of the budget of the *state of the entire people.* But one would be wrong to think that the loss to the economy because of totalitarian policies is limited to maintaining the police force and the control of individuals. The social manipulation of large segments of the population has an economic cost. In concrete terms, every time an "industrial complex" is built, the gross national product may rise. But this represents a proportionate decline in what the worker receives, since these new cities, which mushroom overnight, do not provide services—roads, hospitals, stores, amusements—which the average

provincial capital does. A clear analogy can be drawn between the losses suffered by Communist economies and certain absurdities which find their way into the calculations of Western GNPs, where antipollution devices are counted as part of a country's riches, and the social costs of urban traffic jams are neglected.

The obvious costs, economically speaking, are budget appropriations earmarked for the KGB. We simply do not know how many rubles and men are devoted each year to police work in the USSR. The less obvious costs are absorbed by the economic policies of social control. To a large extent, these explain the stagnation of the real standard of living of Soviet workers. With the fall in the rate of economic growth to zero, the USSR will increasingly be engaged in a balance between repressive goals and economic goals, the policy characteristic of Tontons Macoutes. Up until now, statistics of industrial growth have disguised this situations, whose actual effect is to obstruct any rise in a real standard of living by the constant displacement of the working population.[26]

Social repression is the principle characteristic of the Soviet system, much more than the repression of individuals, which preoccupies Western journalists.

Yet, this repression is not up to its task. The sharp decline in births in Russia is sufficiently clear—from 23.1 to 14.6 per 1,000 in ten years—to indicate a sharp change in urban *and rural* attitudes.

A current is running through both geographical areas.

A Decline in Administrative Efficiency?

Until now we have assumed that the machinery of government, in the strict sense—the KGB, army, bureaucracy, communication systems, hospitals—have been untouched by the economic problems that plague industry and agriculture. Although precise measurement is impossible, is it true that the third and fourth sectors of the economy are consistently productive?

If we wish to understand what is now taking place in the Soviet Union, we are forced to hypothesize a general decline in administrative efficiency. A curious but massive fact requires this. The USSR is the *only* country in Europe where infant mortality has increased between 1970 and 1973, going from 24.4 deaths among children of less than one year per 1,000 live births to 26.3 per 1,000.[27] This

rise is statistically "significant." A rise in infant mortality in an advanced country is extremely rare. The several countries of the world where a similar rise took place, again between 1970–1973, were in decidedly underdeveloped countries, like Kuwait. Such a phenomenon is equally rare in underdeveloped countries. It implies a decrease in the efficiency of the medical system.

We can legitimately conclude that the Soviet hospital system is currently in disorder. But just how bad is this disorder?

We can hear the creakings of the Soviet administrative machinery. It is obviously more difficult to measure the "productivity" of the KGB.

The Weakest or the Strongest Police in the World?

There are certain vibrations and tremors emanting from the ranks of the CPSU. The KGB has installed in the Federated republics an agent in each of the party's political offices. Most notably in the Ukraine, local purges follow one upon the other. A rise in social tensions is pushing the KGB and the army to the summits of various administrative hierarchies of the Soviet Union.

A sign of this apprehension is the reinstatement of capital punishment for economic crimes. Historians interested in crime in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are of the opinion that *severe penalties* are indicative of a *weak repressive system.*[28] For inadequate control over the population in its entirety, exemplary punishments are sought. What occurred under Stalin, when innocent and guilty alike were accused indiscriminately, no longer holds. There are many Soviet citizens sentenced for breaking the law. But the severity of punishment—death for embezzlement—reveals the inability of the police to arrest or even spot most delinquents. The pain of death for theft is characteristic of eighteenth-century England. Certain factors explain the growing problems which face the Soviet repressive system. But it is likely that police inefficiency is at least in part due to increasing disorder within the entire bureaucratic machine.

The Soviet police have given some striking examples of their inefficiency. In October (1975), the showing of a movie on the outskirts of a work camp was a real first, but also a curious indication of something amiss. Individual movements seem to be increasingly less well controlled. French students, who spent six months to a year in

a Russian province, after several unsuccessful attempts, managed to leave the city where they theoretically were assigned places of residence. In 1976, Amalrik gave an unflattering picture of the efficiency of the KGB.[29]

Torpor and nonchalance seem to be overtaking the administrative structure. The Soviet state has rediscovered the tradition of the tsarist bureaucracy. The Communist state is not called upon to *wither away*—as Marx and Engels predicted—but to *rot*.

No longer impelled by terror, the police, just like industry, is languishing. On the other hand, the new class does not want a return to Stalinist years, knowing full well that reactivating terror probably will result in police control of the state apparatus and the murder of the apparatchiki.

Strictly speaking, Stalin's police were not efficient. It undoubtedly had many arrests and executions, but it essentially directed its attacks against the innocent. From an official point of view, it is much more difficult to arrest 25 real dissidents than to pack off 1,000 kulaks, 10,000 enemies of the people, 1,000,000 British secret agents, or 1,000,000 Trotskyites to Siberia. In the present-day USSR there is a need for genuine repression and genuine police to arrest the truly guilty. The KGB seems to be poorly adapted for these new functions. Its sociological traditions—the habit of designating an entire class an enemy, and of massacring it for the glory of the Soviet revolution—makes it difficult to survey real flesh and blood *individuals* who traffic and plot against the state. The KGB would have less difficulty in converting itself into an opinion-polling agency (on the order of the French Institute of Public Opinion or the French Society of Public Opinion Polling) than into an efficient police patterned after the West.

The state apparatus is not going to revive an attack against society in order to regenerate it. Rather, it is the state apparatus that is being influenced by society. At a great distance, we are witnessing a simultaneous decline in the efficiency of the police, bureaucracy, industry, and agriculture.

The increasing disparity between the rate of investment and rate of growth is an indirect indication of the total decline in overall efficiency. The different sectors of the economy are mutually interrelated. The KGB is exhausting itself in containing economic crime, which leaves little energy left for strictly political repression. Tech-

nology is not furnishing the police with the necessary modernization. Soviet backwardness in computer technology in itself implies a decline in KGB efficiency relative to its Western counterparts. In addition, the numerical weight of the KGB is causing the total productivity of the Soviet economy to fall. As in all crisis situations, vicious circles whirl about and carry along a despondent Kremlin.

Brezhnev's Communism is more and more a type of totalitarianism moderated by the bureaucracy. The regime admits that it can no longer control the movements of the populace.[30] Demographers are complaining about this situation. They cannot clearly distinguish between independent social phenomena and social manipulation. Contrary to the will of planners, the populace is moving from the Far East and entering the Baltic republics and, above all, flowing toward the Black Sea region. They are moving toward the south, the sun, the sea, and fruits, toward the southern part of the Ukraine and the Caucasus which would have become, in the absence of Communism, the Russian equivalent of California. Moreover, it is in this part of the world that one finds, in the summer at least, the greatest proportion of Soviet hippies, long-haired youths in American t-shirts: our spiritual brothers. Brezhnev's speeches would almost cause us to forget their existence.

Russian Poujadism: The Second Phase of Stalinism

For the time being, the Soviet system has been able to maintain a sort of hostility and mistrust between proletarians and intellectuals. This mistrust is clearly discernible in interviews of intellectuals and artists who escaped to the West. They are not *always* aware of the fact that the antagonism between them and the populace has been artificially contrived. Even if they are not openly hostile to the people, Soviet intellectuals who have fled their country often exhibit a somewhat bizarre indifference, reminiscent of Tolstoy, to the problems of the manual laborer. On the other hand, workers and employers seem shocked by the material advantages of intellectuals. The regime is fairly skilled in infusing the masses with a Russian version of Stalinist Poujadism, a hybrid variety whose motto could be, applying Siné's formula to Russia, *Les intellectuels c'est La Narchie (Intel-*

*lectuals Mean Anarchy or Narcosis).** As much as it can, the official culture tries to depreciate human sciences. It is physics, biology, astronomy, and technology which contain the good and beautiful. History, economics, and sociology are considered subordinate studies. This is extraordinary in a country which calls itself Marxist-Leninist. What is Marxism if not *"the application of materialism to history?"*

The glorification of science, with the periodic appearance of pseudo-sciences—Lysenkoism, Joseph Stalin's general course of non-comparative linguistics, without forgetting Leninist sciences—goes hand in hand with the de-Marxification of society. As a destabilizing element, Marxism encumbers the ruling class. It is entirely understandable that the rulers seek to rid themselves of it.

New Forms of Cultural Repression and the End of Culture

The approach toward the "ideological struggle" is in the process of change in the Soviet Union. The Marxist-Leninist drone is no longer sufficient and the regime is clearly orienting itself toward an explicitly fascist ideology. There are several elements in this readjustment. In the USSR, the traditional Soviet culture is moribund. Cultural life is being drained of "ideology." Typically, it is being replaced by nationalism and racism. The system is in trouble and it is looking for scapegoats: intellectuals Jews, and for lack of convenient Reds, and Yellows.

The intensity of cultural repression has increased rather than decreased under Brezhnev. The picture the media gives us is, as usual, misleading. Contemporary books, films, and songs give a more accurate picture, imparting to the Soviet regime an aura of science fiction. Authors like George Orwell, Ray Bradbury, or Philip Karl Dick alone have dared to construct models sufficiently totalitarian to be applicable to present-day Russian Communism.

Let us hypothesize a typical Russian provincial city "x" with a population of half a million and a university. This city has *three* bookstores, each the size of a neighborhood grocery store in France. The books found there are all scientific and technical, or children's

*Siné—twentieth-century French cartoonist and humorist.

books. There is no literature. The Russians do not read or no longer read Tolstoy, Turgenev, or Gogol. Dostoevski is on official or semi-official indexes. *Practically speaking,* the whole of Russia's traditional literature is proscribed. The books are simply no longer printed. In this domain, the Russians have neither formal nor real freedom. Pushkin alone seems to find favor in the eyes of the censors. The inevitable *Eugene Onegin* is the only classic available to the masses in a city of half a million inhabitants. These facts are important because the West is still under certain delusions about the availability of books in the USSR. We are quick to believe that the Russians are readers of good, if orthodox, books. Statistics given to UNESCO by the USSR concerning their number of publications are completely erroneous. Books are proscribed in the USSR in the manner of *Fahrenheit 451.* Only the books of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and especially Brezhnev are available to everyone. We do not realize in the West that Brezhnev is presented in Russia as an intellectual of the first order, preceding Michael Suslov on the philosophic hit parade, leaving perhaps Lenin as *top of the pops.* Several socialist realist works, very much dated, complete the picture. The libraries are inaccessible because of extremely long lines. The regime has clearly not killed every desire to read.

The suppression of books in the USSR is accompanied by a hint of liberalization with regard to the *content* of the several copies allowed to be published. But each loosening up on the part of the censor implies the curtailment of the book's circulation. If a heterodox book is authorized, its circulation is limited to a few hundred copies. In authorizing such books, the regime is given some liberal pretensions. In the USSR, there is a strict relation between the liberalism of the author and the circulation of the book: Liberalism x Circulation = a Constant. The greater the circulation, the less are the liberal elements of a given work. The less circulation, the more liberal.

Samizdat represents one limitation of the formula, but it still does not escape its rule. Clandestine works are almost completely removed from the control of the system but they circulate in only a few copies. Official propaganda—the works of the secretary-general-ideologue-marshal Brezhnev, for example, represent the other end of the spectrum. Their content being totally controlled by the state, their circulation is at a maximum. Intermediate examples can be found, where certain fairly explicit works circulate in a small number

of copies. Thus, the reappearance of certain discourses on psychoanalysis do not leave the hands of specialists in Moscow. *The Problem of the Unconscious,* by Philip Bassine, discusses, sometimes in a reasonble way but always reserved, several of Freud's hypotheses.[31] While the references in the work are mainly to Leninist theory, there are also, as if by compensation, many interesting dialogues with Western specialists in the appendices. This work will not have any earthshaking influence on the development of psychology. The preposterous organic/cybernetic theories of Russian physiology is not yet exorcised: it will be some time before dialectical materialism moves beyond the eighteenth-century understanding of man as "animal machine." Nevertheless, Bassine's book marks the end of absolute censorship in the USSR. At last, the hypotheses of Freud can be discussed even if condemned. It was not long ago that all allusions to psychoanalysis were prohibited. We are far from the liberalization allowed in certain People's Democracies such as Hungary, where the private practice of psychoanalysis is tolerated.[32] We are also light years away from a thorough and honest exegesis of Freud's theses. The essential characteristic of Bassine's book is extreme simplification and a particularly inadequate presentation of the Freudian view of sexuality. Puritanical attitudes prohibit even raising the question of sexuality. In the Kremlin, as in Western Europe of the nineteenth century, people are concerned that sexual liberation leads to the dissolution of society.

Philip Bassine's book, prefectly candid and professional, although orthodox, is no threat to the Soviet social order. Its very limited circulation guarantees that it will not leave the hands of the initiated.

The cinemas of our hypothetical city show only three kinds of films, featuring war, sentimental love stories, and foreigners. Several French films are shown which give us some idea of present-day cultural norms in the Soviet Union: Louis de Funès and Jean-Paul Belmondo; they are what is available to socialist man. I have nothing against de Funès or Belmondo. Far from it. But I would be against a Funès/Belmondo monopoly. There are five or six movie houses in this city of half a million inhabitants. While television shows the same films of love and war, it also has more shows about local folklore, which do not seem to interest the Russians, as well as recitations of the inevitable Pushkin. Songs and records are no exception to this cultural hyperconformism. Soviet students of French literature are unmoved by the task of writing on the outdated works of Mireille

Mathieu, Sheila, Claude Francois, Dalida, Aznavour, Adamo, and Edith Piaf. Recordings of their songs are permitted only if licensed by the appropriate governmental agency.

In contrast, the People's Democracies are on the cultural wavelength of the West. In Hungary, abstract painting is given approval and is even found in state museums. Bookstores in the countries of Central Europe *are vital places,* even if censorship takes its toll. The German Democratic Republic is an oasis of liberty and nonconformity compared to its Soviet overlord. Bare breasts can be seen on the screens of East-Berlin.[33] In five years they may see the buttocks, in ten, genitalia. Fifteen years may bring hardcore porn. In 1990, on the screens of Novosibirsk, Rostov, and Minsk, the heirs of the proletarian revolution will still be holding hands, or rather, holding each other's little finger.

The recalcitrant peoples of Central Europe have improved their standard of living. Similarly, they will achieve cultural liberation. The Communist mode of production is not anticultural *if freedom is firmly fixed by popular demand.*

Everything seems to show that Soviet culture, after the springtime of the 1920s, and the vacillations of the thirties, forties, fifties, and especially the sixties—with the publication of Solzhenitsyn—has finally entered an era of absolute conformity. The Russians have inherited the worst of what the West produces, as far as the most dreary of mass culture is concerned. We criticize the alienating "dream-world" of the 1950s and 60s, which diverted working men from their necessary struggle, and fed the imagination of frivolous city girls. All these criticisms equally apply to the USSR of today, with one exception. The Russians have no choice as far as culture is concerned. For them it is official culture or nothing. A good part of Western culture is protest oriented, in one way or another. Our workers can, if they want, escape to Sheila. The breakthrough of singers such as Maxime Le Forestier or Juge Lama shows that the freedom of Western masses is not simply formal; it is also real, whatever its limitations. In the USSR, there is neither real nor formal liberties.

We still have to see whether this new conformism in Russian cultural life is intended for the ruling class. This is not too difficult. In the apartment of Yuri Andropov, a member of the Politburo and the director of the KGB, there can be found several canvases of abstract paintings.

The Zhdanov era of social realism and cultural theorizing is over in the Soviet Union. But can it simply be said that this corresponds to a policy of liberalization on the part of the regime?

The cultural policy of the regime no longer seeks to *guide, orient, or direct* the masses in a given direction. It is now a matter of stupefying the masses, but without hyperbolic Marxist-Leninist dogmas. It is no longer a matter of ideological experimentation in the cultural domain. It is a question of suppressing culture altogether.

To this end, the regime has reinterpreted or adapted certain techniques used in the West—trite stories about love and war.

A relation can be drawn between the cultural policy of the regime and the state of Soviet society: In the 1920s, the Civil War was followed by the New Economic Policy and rule by the genuine revolutionaries, culture was partisan or semi-oppositional in nature in all areas; from 1930 through the fifties, the emergence of a new class and the phenomenon of self-deception were parallel with an attempt to manipulate ideology and culture—socialist realism; with Brezhnev, the new class comes to terms with itself, and we find an attempt to put an end to cultural research.

The Intellectuals Go on the Defensive

This new policy explains the hardening of intellectual opposition to the regime and the phenomenon of clandestine literature. In the era of socialist realism, Russian artists—writers, painters, and filmmakers—were asked to invent new art forms, even if a little aberrant and ridiculous. Artistic and cultural life, deformed and subjected to the ukases of the government, nevertheless allows for a certain kind of cultural endeavor. The Soviet intelligentsia is no longer asked to create. It is asked to receive its inspiration directly from the popular tastes, or to mass-reproduce copies of elementary art forms. For Soviet intellectuals, to struggle against the regime means to struggle against enforced idleness. We can feel the effect of the second phase of Soviet Kulturkampf even in the West. The flow of worthwhile films and novels exported here up until the 1950s has stopped. The only exception seems to be *Andrei Rublev,* which very

few Soviets themselves had seen.* They are replaced by war spectaculars, such as *They Died for Their Country,* which are now offered to us by Sovexport.

Scapegoats

The struggle of the regime against dissident intellectuals, who are more and more numerous and resolute in their criticism of the system, is a common phenomenon.

Much more serious is the recent reactivation of political antisemitism, excellently described by Paul Lendvai who writes of the use of antisemitism by certain Communist governments in Eastern Europe, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union.[34] Irrefutable proof of this appears in printed form. Articles in newspapers, brochures and books officially published by various regimes form the bulk of material used by Lendvai. The Soviet rulers have rediscovered the age-old methods of fascism and tsarism. They are trying to channel popular discontent by erecting traditional scapegoats. Before investigating the political and social significance of these antisemitic moves, it will be worthwhile to cite some concrete examples from official texts to demonstrate that the CPSU does not take a back seat to Hitler's National Socialist Party. The moral and intellectual bases are the same in both cases.

The Jews in Eastern Europe are accused of a plot against the "Socialist state" and of loyalty to the state of Israel. Antisemitic literature refers to them by the term *Zionist.*

The party line as far as "anti-Zionism" is concerned is brought out in a book by Yuri Ivanov entitled, *Watch out for Zionism!,* published in 75,000 copies in early 1969 and reissued in 200,000 copies in 1970 (a real hit!). This book was greatly admired by the larger Soviet newspapers. The reissue in 1970 contains "new proof of the subversive activities of the Zionist movement against Socialist countries." The Rothschilds are accused of having financed not only Israeli militarism but the *"counter-revolutionary Czechs,"* the *"neofascists"* of Federal Germany, and the *"Vatican."* The French branch

**Andrei Rublev*—a film about the Russian monk who was a painter of icons and frescoes in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

of the family was accused of "directly financing the Czech counter-revolutionaries thanks to an open bank account in a Tel Aviv bank."[35] Excerpts from a report of Soviet professor Y. Yurseyev, dated October 4, 1967, read:

> The number of adherents of Zionism is mounting. In the United States alone, the figure can be put at twenty to twenty-five million. Among these are Jews and non-Jews alike. They belong to associations, organizations, and societies that play the most important roles in the economy, politics, culture, and science of America. Zionist lawyers comprise about 70 percent of all American lawyers; physicists, who are working on secret projects and preparing weapons of mass destruction, are 69 percent Zionist; industries are more than 43 percent Zionist. Those who hold to Zionism among American Jews control 80 percent of the local Jewish agencies and International Workingmen's Associations. Moreover, about 56 percent of the large publishing houses serve Zionist ends.[36]
> [This passage tells us much about the reliability of Soviet statistics.]

These "analyses" give us some idea as to why Soviet Jewry apply for so many visas. The pogrom is clearly going to follow. The concentration camp already exists but is not reserved exclusively for Jews.

These texts give us an indication of the state of panic which now reigns among the rulers in the Kremlin. This antisemitic policy may be odious, but it is also very revealing. If the Soviet regime requires this kind of baiting, it is clear that it is losing ground, that a crisis mentality is developing throughout the whole of Soviet society. The absence or presence of antisemitism in a given social system can be considered an index of a society's health and political stability. Among the People's Democracies, two have resorted to antisemitism. In 1968, Poland sought to expel its Jews, half-Jews, and quarter-Jews—the police blotters consider a Jew any individual who has a Jewish grandparent. An outlet for popular discontent must be found. In 1970, the workers in the Baltic area took to the streets. During Czechoslovakia's "normalization," the Husak clique sought to tie the Prague Spring to a Zionist offensive, without the least success. Only sick regimes have need of antisemitism. Hungary does very well without it. In East Germany, there are nostalgic feelings for antisemitism in the party and police, but the country really has no need for it. Moreover, the country doesn't have any Jews. Antisemitism would be useless to Bulgaria, because there is not *any* latent racism there. The Rumanians bluntly prefer the Russians as their scapegoats.

For ideological purposes, antisemitism in Russia seems to be clearly subordinate to the yellow peril. All Russians fear the Chinese. Thus, they provide a convincing national enemy. The regime did not miscalculate when it sought to substitute a pure form of nationalism for Marxism-Leninism. War films, the periodic celebrations of the Great Patriotic War against Germany, and the yellow peril all go together, giving a certain national (socialist?) legitimacy to the system. It is no longer their system that is the best, but the Russians themselves. This is even more flattering to the people and less onerous for the ruling class. As long as the Russians compare themselves to the Chinese masses, they will cease comparing themselves to their rulers.

In about 1975, the yellow peril and the Jew seemed to have joined forces in the plains of the Ukraine. Suddenly, Marxist-Leninist analyses took a jump forward, combining thesis and antithesis into a synthesis of great dialectical coherency, making *Mein Kampf* and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* obsolete, passé in a dialectical sense perhaps. . . .* In the *Ukraine Literacy* (May 30, 1975), there appeared an article by Trofim Kitchko, celebrated author of *Judaism Without Its Mark,* on "A Dangerous Alliance: The Links Which Unite Zionists and Maoists."[37] The subject was quite kitch.

Zionists, Bonn avengers, counter-revolutionary Czechs, Maoists: Soviet ideologues attribute definite properties to a political and social hodgepodge. A confusion seems to exist in their minds between the distorted racial or national threat on the one hand—Jewish, German, Chinese, bourgeois—and microbiotic contagion on the other. A blend of propaganda is perceived as an antidote. It acts like a DDTAB vaccine, which mixes diptheria, tetanus, and typhoid antitoxins, thereby reinforcing all their individual properties. Since Lysenko, Soviet "savants" have had difficulty in drawing distinctions between the social and the biological. But, after all, this confusion is the essence of racism.

It is easy to see why this particularly "in" article was published in the Ukraine. If this nation of nearly forty million individuals were to be ideologically cut off, a formidable ideological base would be provided the opposition. The plan of attack against Ukrainian national-

*_Protocols of the Elders of Zion_—a forged document outlining the plans of an international Jewish group for world domination. The document has been widely used in anti-Semitic campaigns, most notably by Hitler, but also by Nassar.

ism has two facets: on the ideological level, antisemitism; on the physical level, incarceration of Ukrainians in Soviet prisons and camps.[38]

Russian Nationalism Scorned by the Nationalities

The different status of nationalities in the central party apparatus indicates that certain people in the Soviet Union are considered loyal while others are considered of doubtful loyalty. Until very recently, the Russians and Ukrainians totally dominated the upper reaches of the party structure. Let us compare the ethnic composition of the Politburo-Presidium and the Secretariat of the CPSU in the period 1919–35 to the period 1939–63. There was an increase in the proportion of Russians (from 65 to 79 percent), an enormous increase in the percentage of Ukrainians (from 0 to 10 percent), and an increase in the number of Uzbeks (from 0 to 2 percent). There was a sharp drop in the number of Jews (from 18 to 2 percent), a drop in the number of Georgians (from 6 to 3 percent) and Armenians (from 3 to 2 percent).[39]

In about 1960, Ukrainians and Russians seemed to be reconciled. The Ukraine, which in 1941 was prepared to welcome the Germans as liberators, was compelled to side with the Soviets because of Nazi massacres. The Great Patriotic War had partially reconciled all Slavic peoples to the Union. By 1960, it was no longer possible to assume *a priori* that the Ukrainians were separatists in power. Because the Ukraine is the only nation in the USSR which numerically "has the weight" to counter 130 million Russians, this about-face was a boon to the Soviet regime.

Since about 1970, Ukrainian nationalism has had a resurgence, probably stimulated by economic difficulties. Naturally, popular dissatisfaction found support in national sentiments. In 1976, the Ukrainian Communist Party had just been purged, probably at all levels, beginning with its chief, Shelest.

In matters of culture, all the nationalities of the Union, as small as they are, collectively have considerable influence. Having liquidated Russian literature, art, and thought, the regime has, quite by accident, preserved the nationalities from assimilation. Russian predominates as a language of convenience in the whole of the Union, but

the collapse of Russian civilization has preserved the smaller peoples from cultural domination. If present tendencies continue, the Georgians, Baltic people, and Uzbeks will be Americanized before they are Russianized. Russia has no cultural defense against the invasion of pop music.

The regime is increasingly distant from the culturally and intellectually advanced nationalities (Jews, Armenians, Georgians), who played significant roles during the revolutionary period. The Baltic republics—Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia—certainly are among the more advanced regions of the Union and have always been opposed to the regime. Annexed during the war, these three nations endured a very severe program of Russification at the hands of three of Stalin's better known underlings, Vishinski, Zhdanov, Dekanozov. These small Baltic countries did not deserve such attention.

In about 1975, the regime developed confidence in the Slavic people of the Union, and began to mistrust some of the smaller, culturally dynamic nationalities. It also sought support from certain nationalities of less developed regions. The dynamic nationalities in Europe (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldavia, Germany, Poland, Jews) hardly constitute 10 percent of the total population of the USSR. The most populated of all non-Slavic European republics, Azerbaijan, is less than four million inhabitants, that is to say, about 1.8 percent of the total population of the Union. The republics of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan, Kirghizistan) contain about 8.5 percent of the total population. In the long run, however, the extremely high birth rate in Central Asia could introduce a destabilizing factor, but not before another twenty or thirty years. The Tartars and a smattering of other small nationalities count for 7.5 percent of the total population.

The fidelity of Russia and the Ukraine guarantees the ethnic stability of the system. As long as the 74 percent of Russians and Ukrainians, who constitute the heart of the USSR, do not defect, the regime is assured of complete political stability. The smaller nationalities cannot liberate themselves by physical force, political or military, but they do strain the ideological solidarity of the Russian, Belorussian, and Ukrainian republics.

We have seen that certain federated republics (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan) consider the Russians "dupes," victims more than beneficiaries of the system. However, the subject nationalities soothe

Russian pride, but their relatively elevated standard of living, whether inside the Union (Caucasia) or outside (The People's Democracies) cause certain Russians to raise some questions. Their relative deprivation is, ideologically, a destabilizing factor. The Russians will perhaps realize how economically costly the satisfaction of their national vanity is.

The non-Slavic republics are very much bastions of ideological opposition in the interior of the Union. As in Eastern Europe, anti-Communism finds support in national sentiments. The smaller European nationalities seem prepared to replay their decisive role against the tsarist system, this time against the Soviet system. The Politburo of the Bolshevik party in 1917 was composed of Georgians, Armenians, Poles, and Jews. This memory certainly haunts the present rulers of the Soviet Union. The existence of small cultural enclaves, opposed to the assimilation and vacuity of Communist culture, is a significant element of decay in the system. To the internal colonies must now be added the satellites of Central and Eastern Europe. In all these regions, the masses are conscious of the absurdity of the economic system and the class nature of the social system. The intellectuals and rulers of these nations are not alone in understanding the overall social and economic workings of the system.

The Penetration of the Western Model

There is a social system which is more efficient, just, and free than the Soviet system: the Western system. Above all, the stability of Communism depends on the isolation of the Russian people, who must not come to know the reality of this model.

Until now, the Russian people have been fairly well preserved from direct contamination with the West. The greater part of Russian territory (not Soviet territory) is off limits to tourists. Western travelers in authorized areas such as Moscow, Leningrad, and the peripheral republics, and the few students allowed in provincial cities, are singled out by the term *Capstran,* that is to say, foreign capitalist. This gives the Russians the impression that their wealth is not typical of Western countries, but only of Western capitalists. Let's not forget that even in Moscow the average Soviet citizen is not allowed to

speak to strangers and invite them home. A particular bureau of the KGB devotes a lot of energy in seeing that this unwritten law is upheld.

Only the privileged members of the regime have the right to leave the Soviet Union. The insulation of the territory from foreign influence seems to have succeeded. But, at end, the People's Democracies, with their extremely high standard of living in relation to Soviet norms, is a constant outrage to the USSR. The average Russian cannot go to the People's Democracies. And, vice versa, it is more difficult for a Hungarian to go to the USSR than it is to go to a Western country. If an iron curtain separates the West from the People's Democracies, a lead curtain separates the Soviet Union from its satellites. The lead curtain, however, is not adequate.

The Kremlin tries to use the People's Democracies as a buffer against ideologically contaminating influences from the West. Poles, Hungarians, Germans, Rumanians, Bulgarians, and Czechoslovakians travel freely throughout the People's Democracies (with the exception of intellectuals who have their passports confiscated). But, without exception, they are forbidden to travel to the USSR. The Soviet rulers have abandoned the hope of ideologically controlling Eastern Europe, but they still take measures against contamination of the USSR by its satellites. They are only half successful. A Russian might say: Why do we need automobiles? When we take tours we drive tanks. About a million Soviet soldiers are permanently stationed in Eastern Europe. A Soviet male spends at least five years of his military service in Red Army camps and barracks located in East Germany, Hungary, Poland, or Czechoslovakia. There are no occupying forces in less advanced countries such as Bulgaria and Rumania. The Soviet soldiers leave their ghettos very infrequently, but they do manage to see some of the country they occupy. They cannot help but perceive the different standards of living in the USSR and the People's Democracies.

Today, provincial Russians still have their doubts about the wealth of the West. This isn't anything extraordinary. The press bombards them daily with the image of proletarians in the midst of capitalism's crisis, seeing their last savings evaporate with inflation, and then starving to death. In contrast, *the Russians (i.e., from the provinces) know perfectly well that the People's Democracies represent paradise on earth compared to their own country.* The GDR and Poland

have a reputation in the USSR of producing quality goods. Bulgaria is known for quality as well as quantity in fruits and vegetables.

The Soviet soldiers billeted in Central Europe have three kinds of relations with the civilization of the People's Democracies, countries which are behind but not essentially different from the West.

First, there is the relation which has the most notoriety in Western European countries, putting down periodic attempts at liberalization in the satellites—Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Soviet soldiers leave their camps and are confronted with countries that are out and out hostile (Hungary) or open to discourse (Czechoslovakia).

Second, *there is a much more significant kind of contact.* They see *"things"* that are potentially revolutionary for subsistence civilizations. Small German automobiles unsettle the thinking of the Soviets more surely than all the discussions about the nature of the Warsaw Pact or the right of certain peoples to rule others.

Finally, there is the least or most important kind of contact. There are secret relationships developed between Russian and satellite soldiers during maneuvers of the Warsaw Pact. The Hungarian contingent seems to have a somewhat condescending, but not hostile, attitude toward their Soviet "comrades," whom they consider more hassled than themselves. The average Hungarian recruit sees Russia as a Kafkaesk world and thinks that the Soviet soldiers are persecuted by their superiors. This attitude allows for contact because it, *a priori,* excludes hatred.

Class solidarity and worker and peasant internationalism certainly do not mark the relations between Communist countries. These three types of contact do, however, break through the isolation of Russia. It is not unreasonable to say that the present change in Soviet attitudes, the decline of the birth rate and the ever-present aspiration to a higher standard of living, is linked to these forced contacts between the Red Army and the People's Democracies.

The satellites serve as a relay station of Western influence. Wealth alone impresses the Russians, who seem to have no idea of freedom. The citizens of the People's Democracies, however, know the ingredients of life in the West: wealth, liberty, and equality.

Long hair and pop music are slowly penetrating the life of Russian provinces, after having invaded the People's Democracies. Irony of history #101: English pop music forms a true popular culture, in contrast to socialist realism. The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the

Who are sons of the people and grandsons of the proletarians who served as models for Engels in 1844. Perhaps the culture of the working man to a certain extent also dissolves Marxist-Leninist ideology.

The official attitude toward long hair is as follows:[40]

Is it not now painfully obvious that new, severe and even extreme measures are necessary so that propriety once again returns to our dance halls and other places of amusement? We might begin by forbidding our youth access to such places. The way things are now going we will soon adopt all the mores of the bourgeois world, which justifies everything in terms of fashion and modernism—even vomitoriums. The KGB already has too much to do countering intellectual opposition and economic crimes to address itself to the dereliction of barber shops.

The European satellites are (useless) moats which front the USSR. They present elements of ideological decay for the Soviet system. Long-haired Soviet youths are the younger brothers of those who manned the tanks in Prague.

Police and Ideology

To endure, a Communist system needs both a police *and* ideology. In the long run, physical coercion is not sufficient to assure stability for a totalitarian regime. *Exogenous* Communist regimes, meaning those erected by Russia against the will of the people, quickly showed signs of cracking. The police alone could not guarantee the stability of East Germany, Poland, and Hungary in the 1950s. Only in countries where the regime had real popular support (Czechoslovakia) or where the population was almost exclusively peasant and nonurbanized (Rumania, Bulgaria) was the intervention of the Red Army unnecessary. When an urban concentration of labor begins, Communist regimes appear *fragile* and unable to resist a nation which is wholly opposed to them. The whole power of the state, its army and police, is not enough. The example of Czechoslovakia in the 1960s is conclusive. The stagnation of its economy reopened debate about certain Communist principles. There, ideological decay tainted the party structure itself before affecting the masses. Still, the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia had been largely *endogenous*. In 1947, the Prague coup did not require the worker's militias

to join forces with the army. The Czechoslovakian Communist Party received nearly 40 percent of the votes in the last free elections to take place in this pro-Russian country. The Bolsheviks never had such mass support in Russia. And yet, Communism would have collapsed in Czechoslovakia without outside interference. There, the intellectuals and masses managed, only after a time, to actually join forces.

We should not be too quick to apply the Czechoslovakian situation and its disintegration to the Communist system in the USSR. There is one fundamental difference between these two nations. The Soviet people are indifferent to liberty. Above all else, Soviet disaffection centers on their standard of living. However, since Prague, we now know that a Communist system, whose economic development is thwarted, is liable to break down.

Economic stagnation is followed by ideological decay and the breakdown of government. Presently, the USSR is in Phase II, with certain advanced signs of Phase III. There is another profound difference between the Soviet crisis and the Czech crisis of 1963–1968. The disorder in the Soviet economy is more widespread than that which existed in Czechoslovakia. The sharp decline in administrative efficiency and worker's and farmer's productivity were not features of the economic crisis in Czechoslovakia. In the USSR, the crisis mentality is shared by the populace in a more radical but less articulated way. It is the proletariat and the lower levels of the administrative hierarchy who are responsible for the increasing inefficiency of the Soviet economy, while no broad intellectual or political opposition can be organized in the uppermost reaches of the party. In Czechoslovakia, the workers were passive in the midst of the crisis and the struggle was picked up by the party and the universities. In Russia, the masses are leading the elites. Where? And to what end?

Chapter 9

INTERIOR STAGNATION AND MILITARY EXPANSION

Why Coexistence Is Impossible

The aggressiveness displayed by the USSR in foreign affairs is a curious thing, when we consider that this country is in the process of internal decay. However, there is a strict cause and effect correlation between Soviet internal stagnation and military expansion.

Without setting the date, the present Soviet system is condemned to death—in the more or less distant future at least. It might endure if it were alone and isolated, if it were not automatically subject to constant competition with a more advanced system, capitalism. *Coexistence between capitalism and Communism is impossible. Whether we desire it or not, the Western system is, by virtue of its very existence, a threat to the internal stability of the Soviet regime.* The United States and Western Europe give every conceivable kind of military guarantee without mollifying the policies of the Kremlin. The USSR is not threatened militarily but ideologically. For the Soviet Union not to feel threatened in the future, capitalism would have to disappear. Curiously, the objectives of Communism are unchanged, in terms of *the annihilation of capitalism,* but it is now a question of militarily eliminating a system which is economically and socially more advanced. The USSR is on the defensive. It has been ideologically and culturally shunted from the People's Democracies. We have to see that, for the Kremlin, military aggression is also a form of ideological defense.

The Fascist Elements in Foreign Policy

How do the apparatchiki see international relations? Certainly, they fear contagion from the Western model. But they also have certain feelings of superiority, which can be *characterized as fascist.* They believe the West is politically and militarily vulnerable. But it is in their scorn for liberal and democratic regimes that their gut fascist reactions are evinced. In the slightly primitive minds of the old gentlemen of the Kremlin, "democracy" is equivalent to "anarchy." Their attitudes are similar to those of the Nazis and Japanese in about 1940. Watergate, soldier's committees, long hair in Western armies, high rates of inflation, women's liberation, the homosexual front for revolutionary action—for the Kremlin, these are all clear-cut signs of decay. Advanced liberal society equals anarchy.

Given these manifestations of what is, in fact, social vitality, the Kremlin believes it stands a chance. We are not trying to assess in a few lines the complex problem of the internal stability of Western democracies. To understand the aggressiveness of Soviet foreign policy, it is sufficient to see that the Kremlin *believes* in the possibility of the political collapse of the West. Whether this is rational or irrational is irrelevant. This belief exists and must be taken into account. If we wish to change Soviet foreign policy, we must, among other things, demonstrate the solidarity of Western systems, prove to the Soviet Communists that a rich democracy is more solid than a poor totalitarian country. Can we do this?

Nuclear balance makes a sanctuary out of Western civilization. For the first time in the history or humanity, democracy can indulge all the experiences and sensations of anarchy, without fearing a barbarian invasion. A conventional military confrontation will most likely not occur between the USSR and the West. We are wrong to fear, *a priori,* the absolute superiority of the USSR in the field of conventional weapons. The troops in the Warsaw Pact are more numerous and better equipped with tanks, but the Kremlin cannot seriously count on its "allies" in Eastern Europe.[41] In the present state of ideological decay in the "socialist coup," a war with Western Europe would probably begin with the secession of the majority of the People's Democracies, pro-Russian Bulgaria excepted. Rumania could be relied on as the instigator. It is not guaranteed, but there are enough uncertainties in the overall balance of conventional forces to

dissuade the Russians and the West from a confrontation where no one is assured of winning.

There remains the Third World. The Soviet Union hopes to cut Western capitalism off from raw materials.

The Third World

Today, it is in the Third World that we witness the greatest efforts of the Soviet Union to make certain breakthroughs. The USSR offers a model of totalitarian development that is somewhat attractive to the dictators of underdeveloped countries. We have seen the Russians successively try to seduce various countries, among which number Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Uganda. Presently, the USSR has made a breakthrough in Angola, with the help of Cuban troops. Great Britain had its Gurkhas; the USSR has its Cubans. However, the end result of these attempts at penetration is always the same. First, the Soviet Union sends its military technology, deriving some advantages from including "advisors," in an attempt to definitively satellitize an underdeveloped country. Later, this attempt is checked. The dictators of the Third World balk at Marxism-Leninism. It proffers nothing attractive or exciting for non-European countries who have one or even several indigenous ideologies: Islam, pure nationalism, voodooism, tribalism, or Cambodian-style Marxism-Anabaptism, which raised the eyebrows of even the Chinese and Vietnamese. The French are still susceptible to the charms of "Marxism-Leninism." Communist rhetoric resonates in European ears like strains of rationalist melodies. "Scientific" claims on behalf of the Soviet doctrine are always seductive and part of our tradition.

Science and rationalism are less attractive to Idi Amin Dada, Boumediene, and Kadhafi. Let's leave aside the case of Agostino Neto. The universal claims of Soviet Marxism clash with *all* the nationalisms of the Third World oligarchies, which are theoretically based on the Little Red Book, Islam, or healthy tribal customs. The oligarchies of the Third World, whether red or not, wish to independently lord it over their workers and peasants. They are nationalists by taste and interest. In the end, they *always* expel the Soviet advisors. This turn-about generally occurs when a ruling class perceives that local military conflicts are going nowhere, that internal economic development is preferable, and that the West alone has the ma-

chines and technology to provide real advance. The most recent example of economic advance is that of Egypt, who found it easier, in the end, to accommodate itself with Israel than with the presence of Soviet "advisors." Technological weakness always results in the Soviet failure to penetrate the Third World. Neither Egypt, Algeria, India, Iraq, or even Uganda can even attempt the initial stages of economic development with the antediluvian machines stingily offered by the Communist countries.

Military advances can be furthered by a Soviet alliance. Economic advances must rely on commercial agreements with the West.

The USSR Is a Part of the Third World

This rational aspect to the resulting situation overlooks an irrational factor of some importance. The Soviet oligarchies and underdeveloped countries alike share the same basic attitude of anti-Western nationalism stemming from feelings of humiliation. The current economic and social problems of the Soviet Union are causing it to reenter the lists of the Third World much more surely than all the reverses of its diplomacy. The sense of failure on the part of the Communists, perceived by the Kremlin as a *Russian* failure, is one of the most important factors animating Soviet foreign policy. Former colonies and dispirited Communists have, therefore, one thing in common—a feeling of inferiority vis-a-vis the West. We have recently been witness to one of the first massive ideological confrontations between the frustrated totalitarianisms of the Third World (including the Communists) and the wealthy liberal regimes in the West. The UN vote declaring Zionism as a form of racism was a particularly clear manifestation of nearly unanimous anti-Western sentiments. We find again in this UN declaration the association of Jewish culture with Western culture, which is one of the characteristics of the "Kremlin ideology" which has replaced Communism.

But the Third World Is Coming into Its Own

Economically and culturally, the USSR is becoming more and more like a Third World country. This would be very serious indeed, if, in

the meantime, the Third World were not coming into its own. The advance of countries as diverse as Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, Iran, and Ivory Coast, Indonesia, Algeria, and Morocco puts a damper on all efforts of unification based on anti-Western attitudes.

Paradoxically, Soviet attempts at destablilizing the Third World have contributed to an acceleration in the development of a certain number of underdeveloped "capitalisms." The presence of Soviet military power has played no small role in the birth of OPEC. Thanks to a rise in the price of oil which followed the Yom Kippur War and brought in significant revenue for the oil-producing countries—the Arab world, Venezuela, Mexico, Nigeria, and Indonesia now have a good chance to succeed in their plans for economic development.

Only a relative rise in the prices of raw material exports would allow underdeveloped countries to purchase modern *machinery*. The Third World cannot advance economically with the constraints of a backward technology, as exists in Communist countries. The failure of the Soviet economy illustrates that industrialization cannot succeed on the basis of capital accumulation generated exclusively from within the country. The USSR will probably be *left behind* economically by certain Third World countries. It has already been surpassed by countries like Japan, Italy, and Spain as far as per capita GNP is concerned. Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil and Iran have chosen a more conventional path of development, which initially includes strong centralization followed by progressive decentralization. Prior to 1917, this was Russia's policy, characterized by a capitalism largely controlled and fostered by the state. The advancement of these new capitalisms is the major event of this decade, a historical event much more important than the end of the Viet Nam War and the passing of the Indo-China peninsula into the hands of the Communists. The blood baths in the Third World are distressing but are without long-term historical significance. These are cyclical phenomena, not cumulative, and bring into being no economic or psychological change. New ruling classes succeed one another at a dazzling pace; civil wars and coups d'etat are ever-present. It is horrible to say, but the "nonevents" taking place in countries unambiguously ruled by dictators—Brazil, Iran—are more important than the butchery that is taking place in Biafra, Angola, and the Middle East.

The economic advance of Iran creates an attractive model of development on the southern frontier of the Soviet Union. Remember that Caucasia, the region most loosely tied to the Union, largely

touches upon Iran. In twenty or thirty years, the relative ideological forces on the southern flank of the Soviet system are going to reverse themselves, just as they did in Europe after the Second World War. The Middle East, an area in which the Soviet Union seeks influence for obvious geopolitical reasons, is now turning away from the seductions of the Communist model of development. (This does not make local dictators more attractive.)

The decade of the sixties has shown that underdeveloped economies do not make for sophisticated and democratic social systems. The Third World is no longer fascinating, is no longer the field of hope for the Left in the West. Let's recall, with nostalgia, that during the great epoch 1917–30 we first heard it rather naively proclaimed and affirmed that an economically backward country could pass immediately to a higher stage of development and produce a more developed social system than economically advanced countries. The goal of "socialism in one country" is the first historical manifestation of a Third World mentality. It was also history's foremost failure.

A Reasonable Attitude in the Face of the Soviet Presence in the Third World

There remains the problem of when the Soviet Union takes the offensive and supports a "leftist" or "Marxist" faction or, more simply, a militaristic or authoritarian regime like that of Idi Amin Dada. Since the beginning of peaceful coexistence, if we except the particular case of the Viet Nam War which began at the end of the Second World War, the USSR has managed to satellize only *one* Third World country, Cuba. Thereafter, it was the only Communist regime in the Caribbean. This satellization dates back to 1960–65 and was, in part, caused by the intransigent attitude of the United States. Everywhere that the Americans have abstained from countering the USSR's attempts—in Syria, Egypt, China and Uganda—the Soviets have been expelled by the local oligarchies. Western foreign policy (American and European) must stop thinking of Communism as a conquering and universal ideology. In particular, the United States must stop seeing red every time the word "Marxism" or "Marxism-Leninism" is bandied about by a political faction in the Third World. Take Angola, for example. Agostino Neto is of the

"Left," and vaguely Marxist. The USSR furnishes him with arms, and the United States rushes in headlong to support the rival faction of Holden Roberto. Now, what would have happened in the case of American nonintervention? The Left faction would take power with the aid of Soviet arms, constitute a new ruling class, and in ten years would become a typical Third World oligarchy imbued with the tribal features of African culture. This oligarchy would soon require more sophisticated machinery to exploit the abundant natural resources of the country, and, disgusted by the technological failures of the Soviets, it would inevitably turn toward the West. Agostino Neto's own MPLA would expel the Soviets. The time will come, it being sociologically logical that Neto's nominally "leftist" authoritarian regime will degenerate into a nationalistic oligarchy.

At this stage of the argument, it might be asserted in defense of Americans that they were especially concerned with preventing the nationalization of mines and the means of production in Angola. This hypothesis is perfectly ridiculous. Experience shows that the Americans accept all nationalizations for nationalist purposes when they are undertaken by regimes which are without a Communist or "Marxist" label. We have, for example, Brazil or Santo Domingo, where the Trujillo regime successfully undertook a policy of broad nationalizations, somewhat for Trujillo's own personal advantage. At his death, Trujillo had title to the greater part of his country's goods! Americans accepted significant nationalizations in Chile *before* Allende, during the administration of Eduardo Frei. They have recently accepted from the current president (social-democratic) of Venezuela the total nationalization of United States oil companies on January 1, 1976, having agreed to surrender title to their holdings within ten years. The same arrangement applies with regard to "revolutionary" but non-Communist Arab countries, whose nationalizations are not taken seriously by the Americans. The same policy holds for reactionary regimes like Saudi Arabia and Iran, which have reasserted control over their petroleum. Contrary to Soviet policy, American foreign policy remains "ideological." Unlike Brezhnev, Kissinger still believes in the vitality of "Communism."

Was the United States then concerned about the Soviets usurping Angola's natural resources? No, inasmuch as the Soviets still lack the necessary capital and technology to expolit their own mineral wealth. USSR intervention can only be successful if opposed by the United States in a long and bloody war, which creates a spiritual community

between the leftist faction and the USSR. If Washington were to give Moscow a free hand in one of such efforts, the Third World would have no difficulty in recognizing Soviet imperialism for what it is. The supercilious and racist manner of the technicians sent by the Kremlin into underdeveloped countries would be sufficient to disgust them. This was seen in Egypt, Yemen, and North Viet Nam. An American attitude of nonintervention might even be more politic. The United States could systematically second any Soviet endorsement of a faction, rendering war and arms importation unnecessary. Moreover, this attitude would aggravate the economic crisis in the Soviet Union, which depends on arms exportation to survive or simply to justify the existence of its arms industry. The Americans should make use of their economic power to undersell Soviet armaments without preoccupying themselves with the ideological justifications of those in conflict.

The Angola case is the last example on a long list. This country has only recently been decolonized. In the rest of the Third World, oligarchies are entrenched. In some of these countries, legitimacy is based on tradition (Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Thailand); others are military—leftist (Peru) and rightist (Brazil)—others are "revolutionary" (Algeria) or Communist (China, Korea, Viet Nam).... The list is interminable. In the majority of cases, armies took power, not Communist parties. In 1917, the Bolshevik party had a great technical advantage in its mode of organization. It was centralized on a military model. Armies are no less "democratic centralist" than Communist parties. The spread of the tank and the machine gun has made the armies of the Third World the successors to Leninism. They are of all colors: left, right, Arabs, Africans. This ideological diversity obscures a fundamental similarity as far as tactics is concerned. In an underdeveloped country with a diffused peasantry, any army whatsoever has the upper hand. It is a sad situation, but it will not upset the equilibrium of the world to the advantage of the Soviet Union. The army has replaced the Communist party in the path to dictatorship.

China

The nature of relations between China and the Soviet Union is one of the great unknowns in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

There are some elements that point to reconciliation and others to the permanency of the schism between the two Communist powers.

A trend toward reconciliation is a concomitant of China's development toward more Soviet forms of organization. The Chinese rulers, like the Russians twenty years earlier, will emerge from their self-deceptions, drop their illusions about the nature of "advanced" Communism, and begin behaving like an ordinary privileged class. They will reap all the contradictions and distortions arising from the features of Communism—collectivization, literacy, technological backwardness, and conflict-oriented ideology. But they have one significant advantage over the USSR in the absence of important blocks of national minorities. In the 1960s, China was able to harass the Uigurs unhampered by federated republics and the preservation of national cultures. Ultimately, the Uigurs were forced to flee to the Soviet border. The difference in China's situation lies in the fact that it has problems stemming from centralization. Its economy *is* decentralized, without threatening the unity of the state. If China successfully passes to a second stage of development and facilitates regular increases in the standard of living of its population, its aggressiveness should subside. On the other hand, if it fails to adapt, the "ideological" pressures from the advanced capitalism in the region —from Japan, South Korea, and Formosa—is going to make itself felt. For China, as for the Soviet Union, the West (in this case, Japan) represents a serious threat.

If this happens, China may follow a Soviet path and become increasingly militaristic and aggressive *toward* the USSR. A totalitarian regime is quite skillful in choosing official adversaries, or scapegoats, *who are not genuine ideological enemies.* The Soviet regime has generated hatred against the yellow race, while the Chinese Communists have designated Russia as its principal enemy. When the Chinese were "pure," that is to say, when they sincerely believed they represented revolutionary truths in the face of Soviet "social fascism," the conflict became aggravated and erupted into frontier skirmishes. But if both regimes were to recognize each other for what they are, a ritualistic form of aggression would occur, each presenting itself to the other as a scapegoat. In this situation, it would be taken for granted that all posturings merely intended the internal stability of the two totalitarian systems, equally threatened by ideological competition from the West.

We know too little about China to predict its course. It has yet to

complete its first revolutionary phase. The death of Mao Tse-tung, who alone played the role of a Chinese Stalin and Lenin, will lead to some shedding of light on the situation. On the other hand, it is certain that the Soviet Union needs external enemies to justify its totalitarianism and militarization. The Kremlin will continue to invoke the yellow peril, though in a somewhat cynical way and without any real personal animosity. But there always exists the possibility of a real flare-up in the USSR-China conflict. This is because *totalitarianisms* generate genuine fear. Each know what the other is capable of. The USSR knows that China has liquidated X million of its citizens, and vice-versa. Despite mutual respect and admiration, Stalin and Hitler were unable to live in peace.

A More Slippery Slope: Militarization

What are the advantages for Soviet rulers in military expansion?

1. *The general economic status quo:* Arms production is a centralized undertaking. By concentrating efforts in military areas, the proliferation of the second sector of the economy—the black or free market—is prevented.

2. *Balance of payments:* Soviet technology is only competitive in the area of arms production. Until now, the exportation of military hardware has allowed the USSR to balance its trade. Arms production finances its agricultural deficit.

3. *Long-term social equilibrium:* The stagnating standard of living prevents the appearance of social problems inevitably created by the development of a consumer society—political liberty flows naturally from freedom of economic choice, the freedom of employment, and automobiles.

4. *In the short term:* The climate of hysteria directed against foreigners establishes a false solidarity between rulers and ruled in the Soviet Union.

In the USSR, as in unstable capitalist countries, the militarization of society has internal as well as external purposes. Each increase

in the number of Soviet soldiers can be taken in two ways, as foreign aggressiveness or as the desire to neutralize the social effects of an ever-increasing youth population, by calling them to serve their flag. The USSR, as with the People's Democracies, are terrified of their youth. Juvenile delinquency is one of their major problems.[42] The Soviet regime's response to anarchy is always militarization, a kind of conditioned reflex developed during the Civil War period (1918–21). The armed forces in the Soviet Union have increased by 425,000 men in ten years, according to the Institute of Strategic Studies in London. Their purpose is to draft youths as much as it is military. Military service condemns youth to three years of forced labor.

Indeed we may question the military prowess of the Red Army. Over 3½ million men strong, it has not even been successful in making Hungary toe the line. This small neighbor of Russia continues to court the avowed enemies of Communist Russia, China, the United States, and Israel, as if it were nothing out of the ordinary. The Red Army's purpose is not limited to guarding the borders of the Soviet bloc. The Soviet Union's conventional forces are proliferating, even though they might seem out of place in a nuclear era. But, it also serves social functions, which do not concern the West. It is also a civil war army.

We must not overlook the role of military power in terms of "ideological competition." The Red Square parades compensate somewhat for the ridiculous effect that massive Soviet grain importations produce. We must take account of certain psychological quirks of the Kremlin rulers. They are personally chauvinistic and flattered by *their* military power.

There is no single cause for Soviet military expansion. All the vices and weaknesses of the Soviet system lead down a steep path, toward arms production and the militarization of society. It assures the economic status quo, in the short run, the preeminence of the centralized sector and a balance of trade; it is necessary to compensate for the ideological weakness of the USSR, feed the chauvinism of its leaders, and remedy the youth problem, while making their aggressive foreign policy credible. But nowhere today does there appear a clear will to subject Western Europe, the Middle East, or even Angola, where *Cuban* troops were dispatched. Any tactical military strike by the Soviet Union would place Soviet soldiers in contact with the more dynamic cultures of the Third World, of Europe, and aggravate its internal decomposition. The prodigious development of the

navy in the last few years is a perfect response to the internal necessities of the Soviet system. The production of warships is ideally adapted to the centralized nature of the economy. A powerful fleet allows the USSR to parade itself before the world without putting the Soviet people in contact with Westerners, as each ship is a small, floating prison for its crew. The Soviet merchant marine has undergone as much prodigious development as has been directed toward warship production. It serves the same function, inasmuch as it brings the crew under a quasi-military situation, stimulates production in the centralized sector of the economy, and further allows the USSR to perform services for other countries, by transporting their merchandise.

Aggressiveness and Caution

The cautiousness of the USSR in the international realm is indeed remarkable. It sells and ships arms, and sends out technical advisors, but it never dares to undertake precipitous military adventures. Since 1945, the Soviet Union has been very conservative in its military campaigns. In Budapest and Prague, they acted to prevent the falling away of the People's Democracies. Moreover, the USSR has always waited till the last moment before intervening. This moment is indicated by a return of freedom of expression and political pluralism. As long as a People's Democracy is content to remain independent in foreign policy and traditionally totalitarian in domestic affairs, the USSR will accept the situation. Yugoslavia and Rumania have escaped the fate of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. This discrepant treatment proves that the USSR is more motivated by the fear of ideological contagion than by the will to power.

The international behavior of the Soviet Union is a strange mix of aggressiveness and caution. It can be attributed to both the conflict mentality and circumspection which inspire Communist thought. The policies of the Kremlin can also be thought of as irrational in a manner typical of an underdeveloped country. Because Russian Bolshevism has not excelled the tsarist empire, the Soviet oligarchy feels humiliated before the West. The behavior of the Soviet leaders in foreign affairs is not too different from that of certain chiefs of formerly colonized peoples. Humiliation is transformed into hostility. The most extreme caution and a fear of direct confrontation is a

hangover from the feeling of inferiority. Frantz Fanon's books are indispensible to comprehend the international behavior of the USSR. The alliance between Brezhnev and Idi Amin Dada is nothing extraordinary. The Soviet Union is a large-scale Uganda, ostentatiously displaying its European, Marxist-Leninist finery in the same way that Idi Amin bedecks himself in the uniforms of the British army. The aggressiveness of the USSR vis-a-vis the advanced capitalist countries of the world is like that of all economically backward countries.

However, there is one main difference between the USSR and the Third World.

Most of the countries of the Third World legitimately bear a grudge against European, American, and Japanese imperialists and colonialists. Spanish, Portugese, Dutch, English, and French colonialists, whose present-day counterparts are so benign and "civilized," were often bloodthirsty plunderers. Russia forms a part of Europe and was also expansionist in the nineteenth century. Contrary to the Third World, the USSR is wholly responsible for its own underdevelopment. It must be considered perfectly endogenous.

Chapter 10

REFORM OR DISINTEGRATION

Three years elapsed in Czechoslovakia between the stalling of the economic machine and the disintegration of their political system. We cannot apply this time frame *a priori* to the Soviet situation. The Soviet Union is composed of many ingredients, in themselves difficult to digest. Various traditions, divisions, and repressive systems turn the USSR into a veritable political *piece de resistance.* Nevertheless, it is possible to speculate on possible detonators that could touch off either crisis or reform in Russia. Certain events can be foreseen that will likely have profound effects on mass attitudes and attitudes within the CPSU.

No Need to Predict Economic Fluctuations

In theory, Communist rulers have an advantage over their Western counterparts. They are not subject to economic cycles such as created the crises of 1921, 1929, or 1974 in the West. The economy of Czechoslovakia, followed by that of the Soviets, degenerates smoothly and without unemployment until it stalls. The Communist systems have not managed to evolve over the long run. However, they can, to a great extent, control economic fluctuations. The absence of economic shocks is a great factor in their political stability. To a great extent, it makes revolutionary crises impossible. Downward cycles in Western economies have been the catalysts for the

majority of political change. The 1929 crisis gave birth to fascism and leftist experimentation—the Popular Front, Roosevelt's New Deal. The revolutionary crisis of 1848 was preceded by an economic crisis, rather agrarian in certain respects, like that which had to a large extent set off 1789.

If cyclical economic crises are eliminated, there remain other detonators. Revolutions (the 1871 Commune, the German Revolution of 1918, and the Russian Revolution of 1917) have been sparked by foreign war.

In fact, there has been no political revolution in Europe without its detonator, whether it be a sharp downward cycle in the economy or war. If there is no detonator, change will take the form of *reform.*

The organization of the Soviet economy protects the regime from mass uprisings. In the Soviet Union, there is the possibility of economic *crisis,* in the strict sense of a sharp decline in production—an agricultural crisis such as took place in the Old Regime, i.e., a famine. But this is considered so absurd that no one dares to propose it as an immediate possibility. Yet, in 1976, the USSR purchased 60 million tons of wheat, almost twice the total French production. Such a deficit, in the absence of importation, might have provoked a famine or at least unacceptable hardships. We do not know whether there are in the USSR sufficient stockpiles to forestall a crisis. In effect, the West intervenes in the functioning of the economy and, consequently, of the society of the Soviet Union. The American government has preferred not to use the food weapon. By this policy, it indicates that it would not want to see a political crisis in the USSR. Because agricultural deficits are structurally caused and not simply due to the variables of weather, this problem is sure to reappear in the years to come. The collectivized nature of agriculture exacerbates the periods of drought and will spur new and massive importation. The crises of underproduction in advanced Communist systems are as necessary as crises of overproduction in the first phase of liberal capitalism.

As long as the United States, Canada, and Australia agree to sell wheat to the USSR, the regime will be free from crises sparked from an economic detonator. There still is the possibility of *exogenously caused* disintegration, such as by war. The reserve of the Kremlin in matters of foreign policy is quite remarkable. The experiences of 1905 and 1917, the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War, have impressed the Russian rulers. It is questionable whether the

USSR, in its present state of economic weakness and ideological vulnerability, could sustain a prolonged conventional war. We cannot imagine the Red Army in a situation like Viet Nam. Russia has been unable to successfully rule Central Europe. She is not going to engage in distant military campaigns, especially given the fact of the Soviet navy's inferiority to its American rival.

If all this is accepted, we must also accept the fact that the Soviet regime is not going to suffer a violent upheaval. Change in the USSR might take the form of what happened in Czechoslovakia, when intellectual reformers took control of the state apparatus. But the Soviet Union, thanks to its "stable" economic structure and a still-reliable police organization, can withstand several decades of decay and internal stagnation without undertaking any reform. However, a maladroite reform could set off an explosion and the Communist leaders are *by nature* maladroite. They are not accustomed to taking popular reactions into consideration. Brezhnev is not like Giscard, Ford, Wilson, or Schmidt tuned in to the masses and "public opinion."

The vacillations that mark the history of the Communist world since 1945 are the not too surprising by-product of bureaucratic blundering, built into a very *structure* of things. De-Stalinization, with its botched and improvised reforms, precipitated the Hungarian catastrophe of 1956 and very nearly had the same effect on Poland. The sharp rise in prices by the Polish government caused the Baltic workers to riot in 1970. Soviet reform would have to be intelligently executed. The situation in which the USSR finds itself is so implausible and tangled that it would require perfect mastery on the part of a solidly established ruling group. The way elites are recruited assures that mediocrity will reign in precarious positions of power. This is because elites are selected by their peers and not by free elections. Let's pray for a uniformly intelligent Politburo in the years to come. Perhaps the slightly more dynamic bureaucracy in East Germany will educate its tired colleague.

Advisable Reform

Let us suppose for a moment that the USSR suddenly wishes to reform its social and economic system, to give top priority to raising the standard of living of its citizens, and that the Kremlin is willing

to take the political risks involved in the development of a consumer society rather than uselessly directing their energies toward a military buildup.

A reform of the Soviet economy could follow the Hungarian model: autonomy for certain enterprises (not necessarily for individual factories but for certain groups of enterprises) and agricultural decollectivization, with control over the direction and rate of development falling to central credit agencies. Decentralization and decollectivization could be brought about *progressively* sector by sector, province by province. The departmentalization and geographic divisions of the Soviet Union allow for systematic control over the process.

The Soviet leaders are inclined toward such cautiousness. It can't be denied that Soviet domestic policy of the current regime has heretofore been excessively scrupulous. The minor administrative reforms of 1966–70, changing the rules of management without effecting the sacrosanct theory of planning, was brought about with a truly remarkable kind of prudence, factory by factory, beginning with certain enterprises as test cases. We are far from the bold and bungling Stalinist collectivization or theKhrushchevianreforms! The slow pace of reform in 1966 and the extraordinary precautions with which it was applied show that fear and uncertainty reign in the Kremlin. They demonstrate that fear of popular reactions over the short term is increasingly an essential element in the Communist system.

The liberalization of the economy would call for a substantial increase of police activity in strictly political domains. In order to control certain social and political effects, reform would, in the first phase, have to run parallel with a strengthening of the police. The automatic rise in inflation, resulting from the readjustment of uncontrolled prices, would likely cause certain disaffections to come to the fore. Increased activity on the part of the KGB alone would forestall the negative effects of such undertakings.

The more healthy the economic atmosphere, the more likely political reform would follow. The Soviet leaders would have to accept two features of long-term development: 1) a single-party system is incompatible with a consumer society; and 2) economic decentralization facilitates the liberation of the outer-lying, non-Russian republics.

A reform of this kind could be brought off, if it were not undertaken in a foolish way, and if the Soviet leaders did not delay too long.

In ten years, the USSR will clearly appear as an underdeveloped country compared to the People's Democracies. Internal instability will have attained such proportions that reform will be too dangerous. Ideological decay, the arousal of the Russian people, and the inadequacy of the state apparatus will be too advanced. There is an optimal time of reform from which the leaders could profit.

The Breaking Off of the People's Democracies

Rumania has, without too much trouble, reasserted a certain amount of control over its foreign policy. She is collaborating with Yugoslavia, absolutely independent since 1948, in building a small fighter plane. The USSR has eased up. The fragility of the dominator is increasing, while the will to independence on the part of the People's Democracies is going to increase with their material advancement. The Communist oligarchs in the People's Democracies will gain a certain legitimacy from the enrichment of their countries, but only avowed anti-Russian policy can make this consecration complete. In addition, for the People's Democracies, as for Egypt or India, beyond a minimal level of development, *"economic" detachment* from the Soviet camp becomes a necessity. The USSR processes neither the machines nor the technology necessary for truly advanced societies. The stagnation of the Czechoslovakian economy in the 1960s demonstrates this fact. For its part, the USSR really has no interest, other than vanity, to station a million men in Eastern Europe, in constant contact with the goods and wealth of the satellites. Military relations and the interests of all concerned push for Soviet disengagement in Central Europe. The People's Democracies are the bane of the Soviet system. The systematic pillaging orchestrated by Stalin was based on rational objectives. Soviet imperialism was then economic as well as military. The present situation is absurd. The Red Army assures political stability and guarantees the success of certain pragmatic economic experiments undertaken by satellites. The USSR can draw no material benefits from an operation that threatens ideological solidarity. In the People's Democracies, as well as in the federated republics, the Russians pay very dearly for their vanity.

The successive or simultaneous breaking away of the satellites should soon be accepted by the Kremlin without too much fuss.

Prague (1968) marks the end rather than the continuance of an epoch. At this time, Czechoslovakia was the *only* economically developed People's Democracy.

Brezhnev's policies pose real problems for the USSR, leaving them open to a foreign crisis, with all its repercussions on the increasingly precarious cultural stability of the Soviet Union.

It is not difficult to envision certain accidents, such as an armed conflict between the USSR and one or more People's Democracies, precipitating the dissolution of Soviet society. Even without accidents, the system grows progressively weak. There might be exhaustion rather than explosion. The rising discontent in this totalitarian society will likely parallel, as it has thus far, a rise in individual terrorism, as a just response to the national tradition of state terrorism. We already know that the non-Russian federated republics are periodically the scene of crimes against state property. In Georgia, for example, between 1973 and 1976, arson was "suspected" in fires involving movie houses, a theater, a grain elevator, a garage, a gymnasium, and a laboratory. In 1976, this list was topped off by the bombing of a building that served as the seat of Georgian government in downtown Tbilis.

The encounter on a Soviet warship in the Baltic (November 1975), the *Storozhvoy,* reported by Swedish intelligence, marks the beginning of a uniquely Russian rejection of the system. We are no longer talking about individual terrorism. Practically the entire fleet rose up and took control of a destroyer *outfitted with nuclear missles.* It was pursued, bombarded, and finally captured by a combined effort of the Soviet navy and air force. We find in this episode a frightfully unequal and desperate confrontation between the people and the Communist state.

The effectiveness of terrorism will increase as the effectiveness of the police declines. The greater the people's desperation, the bolder crimes will become. Is all this not political fiction? Can one really believe isolated individuals would dare oppose the KGB with minimal chances of success and survival? Yet heroism—or, from the standpoint of the professional psychologist, a suicidal tendency—is common in the USSR.

Jean Baechler, drawing from historic examples of prerevolutionary Russia, points out that the "links between activism and suicide are multiple."[43] Terrorist action is often suicidal action. The rate of suicide is probably increasing in the Soviet Union. Consequently, it

is entirely reasonable to assume that a certain proportion of passive suicides will, in the future, be converted into terrorism, that is to say, active suicides. The frequency of crime should increase with the rate of suicide. As Baechler notes, there is an element of suicide and self-sacrifice in the behavior of intellectual dissidents in the Soviet Union. To a certain degree, the nonviolent protest of Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, or Amalrik serves to alert the West and, indirectly, influence the leaders of the USSR. However, the average Soviet citizen, unknown in the West, can have no hope in these forms of peaceful protest. Only violence will make him heard.

Chapter 11

WESTERN ATTITUDES

The Soviet Union is necessarily hostile to the West whose very existence poses a threat to its stability. The capitalist regimes, bolstered by the disappearance of an ideological threat coming from the Soviet Union, have, on the whole, developed an attitude of tolerance toward Communist systems. The French Communists aside, everyone in Europe and the United States of various ideological persuasions, is agreed to maintain military parity with the USSR. Some are of the Left and others of the Right. Indeed, what would be an intelligent response of a man on the Right to the Soviet system? He first must recognize the existence of a new class, whose interests are separate from those of the workers. Second, indifferent to the fate of exploited classes, our bourgeoisie would venture to come to some understanding with their counterparts in Eastern Europe, the red bourgeoisie. Ruling classes of the world, unite! The travel of Western chiefs of state to the USSR and the People's Democracies are already occasions of great fraternal joy, as ministers from the East and West can (or could) compare notes. Let's imagine a conversation between a Western leader "of the Right" and a Communist leader. The Communist: "How do you achieve this marvellous productivity?" The Westerner: "And you, that discipline which is equally fascinating to us?"

The West is not risking anything. Totalitarianism and high rates of productivity are incompatible in the long run. Western workers are

industrious (too industrious in fact), because they are free, have the right to vote, and, *at least partially,* reap the fruits of their labor.

In all seriousness, Western leaders have no interest in applying Soviet techniques of government and transforming dynamic economies into totalitarian chaos. Among a number of them, however, there is a certain evident fascination with Communism and authoritarianism. The Soviet rulers have absolute *command* over individuals, and their subordinates, though they are less in command of events than their Western counterparts. In such a restricted system, their field of choice is quite narrow. Yet, the Kremlin has the pleasure of terrorizing their subordinates, even if they can't make the world tremble. Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford can make the world stir by simply manipulating interest rates. But, by and large, reprimands aside, they cannot traumatize their subordinates. Western societies are generally becoming increasingly powerful and increasingly disorderly in the exercise of power. This disparity might provoke a certain hardening of hearts in some of our Western rulers, a certain taste for authoritarianism, a fascist temptation. A number of our rightist leaders are not sufficiently exempt from anti-Communist prejudices to be perfectly lucid; others, out of frustration, may even secretly admire the Communists. At any rate, the majority have learned the lessons of history and, along with them, the merits of democracy, for which they are often sincerely attacked. Moreover, the democratic political game also provides a certain intellectual satisfaction to its practioners. It takes intelligence and skill to seduce electors. A political career in the West, in its new mundane atmosphere, has more and more clearly an allure of a complicated game.

A rightist attitude necessarily leads to tolerance vis a vis the USSR. Our bourgeois now make greater efforts to concern themselves with the proletariat. However, their professional competence does not extend to interest in the proletariats of Communist countries.

There are in Western societies certain categories of leaders (*our* elites are multiple and differentiated) who are, much more than our elected politicians, prone to the seductions of social-fascism. The managers of great industrial enterprises, multinational or not, come to mind. Their status is identical to that of their Communist counterparts.

The recruitment and rule in these great enterprises are bureaucratic in nature. Elites are co-opted, decisions are made without

discussion. No real democratic counterweight exists in these organizations, whose structure ends up very much resembling that of the Soviet state. What's more, they function efficiently. We can conceive of certain basic character traits which are shared by Western entrepreneurs and the apparatchiki, particularly, the typically bureaucratic mixture of submissiveness and authoritarianism. In *L'Imprécateur (The Imprecator),* René Victor Pilhes presents the archetype of this bureaucratic mentality; though, in taking certain tendencies to their extreme, it is a bit too terrifying and melodramatic. However, the account can be salvaged in its entirety if applied to the Soviet state. We have seen that the Soviet state is, in itself, a veritable monopoly. Western administrators are interchangeable with managers of Communist factories. These administrators derive no particular satisfaction from the democratic game, which wears on their nerves and intellect. Strikes exasperate them. They are not accustomed to discussion. They are imbued with feelings of superiority, which are wholly groundless. In France, feelings of superiority come with a diploma from the Polytechnique or some other great university. In the USSR, it used to be founded on knowledge of Marxist-Leninist science; now it is through acquaintance with Western culture, forbidden to the masses.

The weight of democratic and anti-Communist traditions continue to have their effect, and these administrators remain extremely "conservative." But several recent developments show that the executives of great enterprises—Galbraith's technostructure—could, if frustrated by increasing anarchy in society, rapidly become the cultural matrix from which fascism arises (of the red or ordinary variety). In France, the appearance in industrial enterprises of executives "with a reddish tinge" is a very disquieting phenomenon. These types would back nationalizations but not a more progressive income tax. Their red or reddish tinge could be a mask to hide guilt feelings or lack of such. International economics sees the more intelligent technocrats increasingly indifferent to the East-West conflict. Firms of a certain size no longer think in terms of a conflict of ideologies. Above all else, they are interested in immediate profits from capital. This explains the heavy investments in the countries of Eastern Europe, which have proven so lucrative. Their concern is to profit from the cheapest and best-disciplined labor force in the world. Westerners furnish the machines, the apparatchiki their pro-

letariats. This kind of collusion, strange at first sight, is really nothing extraordinary. However, the low productivity of workers who grow up in Communist countries puts some limits on this relationship.

The Right in the West is cognizant of the military threat of the Soviet Union, without being overly concerned that there are causes to this aggressive posture. We have to hope that our conservatives will come to understand the new and irremedial reason for this aggressiveness.

In contrast, the typical leftist attitude is informed by pureley ethical criteria—liberty, equality, and fraternity—and not by a sense of what history requires. A man or woman of the Left should take cognizance of the existence of economic exploitation in the USSR, as well as monstrous social inequality, and an equally intolerable absence of freedom. The Left should be unalterably opposed to the USSR, its system, and its barbarity. George Orwell and several other honest individuals have understood the class nature of Communist society, consistently affirmed by Djilas.

In 1945, the situation was hopeless. In 1976, something has changed. The wind has been taken out of the sails of Communism. As Djilas said in a *Newsweek* interview (May 1975), "Communism is a spent force." While the Soviet system is bogged down, the West has rediscovered its economic and cultural strength. To a certain extent, we are able to further the liberation of the proletariat, peasantry, and intellectuals in the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and East Germany.

The Communist bloc depends on the West for its food and machines. Agricultural deficits put the Soviet Union at the mercy of the advanced capitalist countries. Yet, the United States and Canada are right in refraining from the use of famine to undermine the Soviet regime. The peoples of the USSR have suffered enough from such things already, without having to undergo anew revolutionary waves and brutalities in the name of progressive ideals. We are reform-oriented in the West; let us also be so with regard to the Soviet Union. Moreover, the breakup of the Soviet state could have dangerous nuclear consequences and trigger a Doctor Strangelove scenario. Who can be sure that the head of an atomic base, a groveler and lackey of his superiors, would not mistake internal uprisings within the Soviet Union for Western aggression?

What's to Be Done

The first thing to be done is to thoroughly convince the Soviet rulers of the political and military solidarity of the West. Generally, the Kremlin sees international relations in fascist terms. For the being, it is convinced of the superiority of an authoritarian and, where feasible, totalitarian regime. We should categorically reject treaties such as the Helsinki Accords and show greater decisiveness in military matters. It is senseless to propose agreements where we mutually pledge "to halt the armaments race" and allow the free circulation of men and ideas. The arms race is necessary for the equilibrium of the centralized Soviet economy. Restrictions on the circulation of men are necessary for its political stability.

Economic and social reform would have to precede genuine detente between capitalism and the Soviet system. The West can do nothing but threaten the internal equilibrium of the Soviet system. *We are the ideological aggressors.*

The Soviet leaders are fascist in outlook despite themselves. As a privileged class which issued out of radically egalitarian revolution, they find themselves in an unenviable position. Brezhnev and Kosygin are not in the same league as Hitler. They did not create their social system; it was inherited from their ancestors. Brezhnev was eleven years old in 1917. His fascist attitudes are derived from a social system that formed his character, not the reverse. They are not the product of an obviously pathological personality, and thus are somewhat adaptable.

The transition of certain Western European Communist parties should hasten the development of a genuine political consciousness on the part of the Soviet leaders. The ex-Third International, as far as Europe is concerned, is already markedly discordant. Western European Communist parties do not want to be dragged down by the economic and ideological collapse of the USSR. As of now, we simply do not know whether the French Communist Party will disappear from the French electoral scene or become more social-democratic like the party in Italy. Whichever, the Soviet Union is going to lose its most loyal support in the West. The disappearance of Stalinist parties reinforces the image of political solidarity in Western Europe. In countries like Italy and France, it will allow for a position vis a vis the Soviet Union amenable to both the Right and Left. A resolute

policy would of itself give the Kremlin the impression of solidarity. In particular, the Left as a whole should come to accept NATO and the military integration of Europe. It is very important that the Soviet leaders be addressed in terms they understand—the language of pure force. It is also very important to understand that the relaxation of tensions between capitalism and Communism would have to be preceded by the reform of the Soviet economic system. Given the present state of things, the USSR can never feel itself secure. Whatever policy we pursue threatens the equilibrium of the Soviet sphere. This involuntary and unavoidable conflict should be seen as a common ground for a new policy of solidarity uniting the Right and the Left in the West against the USSR.

It is very important that our leaders remove ideology from the East-West dialogue. In eschewing the traditional approach, Giscard did very well on his last trip to Moscow. Rather than say, "Despite the inevitable conflict between our two opposed ideologies, we are all partisans of peace," he said, "These ideological differences are out of date," thereby creating difficulties for the Soviet intelligentsia and technocrats. We must stop being concerned with official Marxism-Leninism. The aggressiveness of the Kremlin in matters of foreign policy are caused by three factors: 1) economic and social problems; 2) the nationalistic and fascist temperament of the leaders; 3) the humiliation of Russia by the West.

Can we accelerate the development of things inside the USSR in order to more quickly bring the crisis of its system to a head?

We have seen that one of the most important elements of instability in the Soviet bloc is the relative poverty of the Russian people in relation to its interior and exterior satellites. Through preferential trade agreements with the People's Democracies, we could encourage as far as possible the growth of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Rumania, Poland, and Bulgaria, *regardless of whether their political systems find favor with us.* East Germany is thoroughly fascist and remains one of the principal backers of Moscow in matters of foreign policy. However, despite the Stalinist appearance of the regime, the economic advances it has made for its people are as great a threat to the USSR as advances in countries where Russophobia unambiguously reigns—Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The more the occupying forces see the economic strides of the satellites and their commitment to a consumer-type society, the more will the USSR be pressed toward economic reform and the

stronger its desire to disengage itself from Central and Western Europe. According to this logic, investments and favorable economic arrangements should be given priority in countries where Soviet troops are stationed, i.e., everywhere but Rumania and Bulgaria. If it can, the West should also encourage feelings of unity and solidarity among the different People's Democracies. To do this, it would have to extend benefits to *all* the People's Democracies, encouraging their development vis-a-vis the USSR. Western companies more and more are investing in Eastern European countries. Western governments should put a halt to investments in the USSR. If possible, they should complement investments among the different satellite countries, establishing economic ties and solidarity between Hungary and Rumania, and Poland and Czechoslovakia. Again, this should all be done while demonstrating complete indifference to matters of regime, never asking for guarantees of liberalization.

We must stop thinking of the Honeckers, Zhivkovs, Kadars, Giereks, and even Husaks as "toadies" of the Kremlin. Rather, we should understand their relation to the Kremlin as a result of a standard of living insufficient to give them legitimacy. If the red bourgeoisies feel that they can do without the Red Army for their survival, they will naturally want to rid themselves of Soviet tutelage. In order to obtain this legitimacy, the economies of their respective countries must advance.

Can a Communist Party in Power Become a Liberal Party of the Right?

Can we really hope for a national economy in the countries of Eastern Europe and legitimacy for its Communist leaders? We already have the example of Yugoslavia and Rumania. The case of Yugoslavia is really not very pertinent, since Tito always *has* been considered "legitimate." The Yugoslavian partisans had no need of the Red Army to take power in 1945. Yugoslavian Communism is legitimate because it is *endogenous*. The term legitimate is here used not in a moral sense but only to indicate that the regime did not require foreign intervention to install itself. Besides Titoism, this distinction would confer legitimacy on Italian fascism, nazism, Stalinism, Maoism, and Castroism. In contrast, Francoism and the satellite regimes of Eastern Europe are not legitimate because their

establishment required the massive intervention of foreign troops. The Czechoslovakian regime was very nearly legitimate between 1947 and 1968, since the Communists would likely have brought off the Prague coup without the Red Army. With the entry of Warsaw Pact troops in 1968, it lost the legitimacy it had.*

According to this understanding, Rumania is a perfectly illegitimate regime, even though choosing to be independent of the USSR. Here is an example of a Communist oligarchy set up by Moscow and splitting away from its influence. The Rumanian leaders seem to have fine political instincts. They have artfully managed things. To placate the people, they have orchestrated an absolutely intense Russophobia. Undoubtedly, they also sincerely share these sentiments. In order not to overly antagonize the Soviet Union, they have abstained from all theoretical matters, showing a sovereign indifference with regard to doctrinal disputes. To shore up their power, they have implemented a harsh system, which is not out and out Stalinist inasmuch as Rumania would want to keep attracting a sizeable number of Western tourists. The cult of the personality in the personage of the great Ceaucescu is, however, one of the more striking features of the system. The independence of Rumania is not merely formal and limited to professions of faith or visits from American presidents. Its economic disengagement from the USSR bears witness to this. Foreign trade with the Soviet Union went from 57 percent in 1950 to 27 percent in 1970. In 1971, Rumania was one of the first countries of the Warsaw Pact to accept Western investments in their industries.

The breaking away of the Rumanian leading class has been very rapid. It occurred at a difficult time economically, when the people's standard of living was still quite low. The other oligarchies in the satellites would have an easier time of it, since their countries will already have achieved a modicum of wealth. They could dispense with a Stalinist phase altogether.

It is an impressive fact that each time a Communist leader from a satellite country gives some indication of independence from Moscow, his country supports him. Gomulka and Dubcek furnish the best examples. Independence under a dictatorship is a preliminary and necessary step as the case of Yugoslavia and Rumania shows.

*Fascist countries in the West liberated by the American, English, and Canadian Troops in 1945 legitimated their new regimes by elections.

Rumania is Stalinist but the Yugoslavia of 1945 was no less so. When a Communist party chooses a nationalist path, the Soviet leaders know that they will collide, not because they are confronting a divided country, a prey to the horrible deficiencies of democracy and the free interchange of ideas, but because they are facing an established and authoritarian regime that has popular support. The characteristic fascist mentality of the Soviet leaders is again revealed in the relations of the USSR with the People's Democracies. The Soviet rulers do not dare militarily provoke regimes similar to their own. Despite the small size of Yugoslavia and Rumania, the potential defense of these authoritarian countries by their regular army has been made credible. The Kremlin would in no way dare launch the Red Army against them.

Leaving the question of national legitimacy, and focusing our attention only on the objective social structure of a given country as defined by economic relations, we find that *the leading classes of the People's Democracies are perhaps already more stable than their Soviet counterparts.* They work toward assuring the material betterment of their country, and they have created, or are in the process of creating, hierarchically but, unlike Soviet society, unpolarized societies. In Hungary and the GDR, there are segments of the middle and working classes well on the way to enriching themselves. Traditionally, such groups formed a part of the social basis of the Right in the West. Present-day Hungary resembles France in the fifties. Without foreign occupation and historically based anti-Communist sentiments, the Hungarian people would undoubtedly vote conservatively to maintain the Kadar clique in power. At any rate, this is what can be heard in Hungary. If free elections were to take place in Hungary, we would expect a victory for the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party (the Communist party), which would play the part of a conservative party. The remnants of socialism inherited from Communism are, in Hungary, rapidly engendering an advanced kind of social-democracy.

The People's Democracies seem to have oriented themselves toward the equilibrium of social forces symptomatic of the nineteenth century in the West. Farmers and the middle class are favored. The reorientation of the economy has benefitted the farmers. They have been decollectivized or set up in liberalized kolkhozes and have profited from the rise in agricultural prices. The pragmatic Communists progressively adopt all the exploitative methods and incentives

elaborated so laboriously by Western liberal bourgeoisies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This, in itself, is not so surprising but it creates some rather curious things. In these countries of the dictatorship of the proletariat, expressions such as *"ignorant as a worker"* can be heard from farmers. In the USSR, on the other hand, if the regime can be said to at least nominally favor any social category, it is the working class. In the rich People's Democracies, disengaged from Moscow, a return to political pluralism is conceivable, where the Communists would play the role of the Right, and the socialists that of the Left, in supporting the rights of the workers. These new forms of pluralistic democracies would have to be understood in a new way. In such a system, there would not be room for a party representing an extreme Right, insofar as the Communist party fills this role quite well.

Toward a Selective Anti-Communism

We should not be overly pleased each time an anti-Communist insurrection takes place in a satellite country. Insurrection, intervention by the Soviet army, economic paralysis: the process by which the People's Democracies break loose from the USSR is often slowed rather than accelerated by these insurrections, *as things now stand.* The Hungarian, German, and Polish uprisings and the Prague Spring did allow for economic and social development in the satellites of the USSR. Without these manifestations of force, the Soviet Union would never have let their satellites choose their own economic path, break away, and enrich themselves. The Communist parties of Eastern Europe have learned much else. The violent years of confrontation with the people, which marked their political history from 1950 to 1970, has transformed the brutal apparatchiki of 1950 into apprentice democrats. The rulers discuss with the people the nagging problems that face the Hungarian and Polish regimes. David Fascilles, in an article on current economic difficulties (on allocating resources) in the People's Democracies, shows that Kadar and Gierek (with less success) inform the people of economic difficulties and explain the necessity for austerity measures.[44] Economic Stalinism is dead in Eastern Europe. Even Husak, a veritable political collaborationist, seems to be able to adroitly manage the economic difficulties which face Czechoslovakia.

If the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe definitely decide, in one way or another, to integrate the masses in their political system, their countries will rediscover the social dynamism that serves the vitality of the West. Hungary seems sincere in reestablishing unions. Truly free unions would introduce a fundamental democratic element into the Communist systems, which would, in theory, *be overlooked* by the Soviet Union. We can imagine the reestablishment of free elections *in the unions* without the forms of Communist party dictatorship being violated. If they so desire, the oligarchies in the satellites of Eastern Europe could have a vast field of social alternatives. Are they as capable of reform as the English ruling class in the nineteenth century? Will they be able to increase worker productivity by first raising wages, and later by allowing a voice in management? The Hungarians have already succeeded in increasing agricultural production by democratizing cooperatives and raising the price of agricultural goods. The leading classes of Eastern Europe must be encouraged in this direction. We should stop thinking them responsible for the sins of their fathers. As the years pass, Russophobia is becoming the chief aspect of the ideology of the oligarchies in the satellites. The death of prewar Communists is soon going to bring about a rapid change in all the People's Democracies.

As much as possible, we should endeavor to legitimate the Communist oligarchs in Eastern Europe, by favorable trade agreements and visits by heads of state, while we boycott Moscow. This discriminatory treatment of various Communist systems was introduced by the United States in 1948 when it supported Tito against Stalin. The policy of Nixon, of going to Bucharest and Peking, should be pursued and amplified by Western Europe in their relations with Eastern Europe, now that Western Europe has recovered economically.

A realistic policy of rapprochement with Eastern Europe would precipitate the dissolution of the Soviet sphere more rapidly and effectively than an undifferentiating attitude of compromise or hostility toward an imaginary block of the USSR and its satellites.

It is essential to understand that, henceforth, Communism has two forms in Europe. One is Soviet-style Communism, which has slowly evolved toward pure fascism; the other is the style of Communism in the satellite countries of the People's Democracies, which is quickly transforming itself into a classically liberal party of the Right.

In 1975, the Editions Sociales published a long interview with Gyorgy Aczél, a member of the Politburo of the Socialist Workers

Party of Hungary (the Communist party).[45] His rhetoric could be characterized as, at one and the same time, intelligible, rude, demagogic, measured, and effective. Gyorgy Aczél's tone is that of a man of the Right, not that of a Soviet apparatchik. He reveals the social workings of contemporary Hungary.

"Many things have taken place over the last thirty years. We have learned much. The Hungarian leaders are preoccupied by the mass state of mind. The Hungarian public attentively watches over all the acts of their political and economic leaders. We are very glad of it. Those who do not understand this do not understand socialist Hungary!"[46]

It is not so clear that the 1956 Revolution was really so well received by the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party. But the recognition of a public opinion independent of the Communist party is a step toward democracy, even if the Hungarian people have payed very dearly for their right to disagree. If Brezhnev or one of his colleagues begins to speak of public opinion, we know that something earth-shaking is taking place in Moscow. The concept of *public opinion* is essentially anti-Stalinist. The Communists abhor it. When Gyorgy Aczél uses the term, he gives a subtle wink to the West, which substantially offsets all the orthodox protests about the fundamental differences between the Hungarian "socialist" system and Western capitalism. The leaders in Budapest are not imbeciles. They know perfectly well that Hungary is in the process of giving birth to a moderately developed Western system. It remains dictatorial for the time being but, without the presence of the Soviet army, will evolve like Spain, that is to say, slowly but surely toward liberalism. Only a French Communist could be blind to the fact that Hungary already resembles France more than the USSR.

Certain Western specialists in international relations, like Andrew Shonfield or Michael Tatu, are perfectly aware of the existence of a break, either potentially or already partially realized, between the USSR and its satellites.[47] They, however, are a minority among the peoples and governments of the West, who too easily forget that Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia played an integral part in European history.

In the publications of EEC agencies, the Comecon is seen as an undifferentiated bloc composed of the USSR and its satellites. No distinction is drawn between the dominator and its potentially rebellious satellites.[48] We still think that to aid Hungary, Czechoslovakia,

Poland, or the German Democratic Republic means aiding the USSR, and each economic failure is perceived as a failure for the Soviet Union. In fact, the success of the satellites is the principal threat to the stagnating power of the USSR.

Hungary is not a miniature USSR reduced in size 24 times. In fact, to consider the People's Democracies as representing the Soviet system as a whole leads to an enormous overestimation of Soviet power. The Russian territory is forbidden to tourists, with very few exceptions. The territory of the satellites is almost completely open to the public. The Communists, most notably in France, would want us to believe that the USSR is a larger and more powerful version of Hungary. The numerous publications of the Editions Sociales on the GDR, Hungary, and Poland bear witness to this.

The standard of living in the satellites is beginning to replace Soviet military power as the focus of pride for the French Communist Party. It is really extraordinarily paradoxical that Communist countries have progressed along "socialist" lines, even despite themselves. Why? Because the presence of the Red Army has transformed these Communist regimes into ordinary pragmatic dictatorships.

Toward a Frank and Blunt Dialogue with the USSR

The opportunity to reconquer, without recourse to outright war, is now present. The intrusion of the European Community in the affairs of the Comecon will unavoidably serve as a provocation to the Soviet Union. As the Western model is in any event a threat to the stability of the Soviet sphere, as no real accord is possible with Moscow, we would be wrong to encumber ourselves. The West has no choice between aggressiveness and compromise. Whether deliberate or not, its economic and social success is tantamount to aggression for the USSR. The West has the choice between a well-thought out aggression or one which is not. *It is necessary to accelerate developments in the Communist world, and to put pressure on the USSR before its decomposition becomes too advanced.* The West has no desire to see a country crammed with thermo-nuclear bombs mired in anarchy. The explosion of the USSR would upset the equilibrium of the world; its consequences are unforeseeable and would be dra-

matic, to say the least. We cannot tell whether the Soviet leading class will have the courage, energy, and intelligence necessary to save the USSR. The West must encourage the Kremlin along the path of reform and military withdrawal, while arguing it is for their own good. The Soviet rulers must *be* divested of their illusion of political and military superiority. In order to preserve peace and coexistence, it is necessary to rid the West/USSR relations of all ambiguity.

Western pressure will not send the apparatchiki off the deep end. The old gentlemen in the Kremlin are no fools. They are clear-thinking political men. Their thought, however, is basically fascist, since it only understands force. The West risks nothing by speaking in this language. Thanks to wheat importations from the various Atlantic Alliance countries or from the "free world," the Soviet leaders have agreed to liberate Leonid Plyushch. The likely weakening of the Soviet Union in the years to come should make Western pressure all the more effective. To be effective, the democracies must recognize their power.

The USSR is already no longer the world's second-greatest power. Its gross national product, conventionally calculated, has been surpassed in 1974 by Japan, 480 billion dollars to 473 billion dollars. Germany is fourth behind the United States, Japan, and the USSR. In systematically deflating Soviet statistics, we see that the German Federal Republic is, in fact, the third-ranking economic power. For its part, Japan is not third, as is often said, but second. Is one really aware of this change in relations? Curiously, the progressive decline of the USSR is in the process of reestablishing the balance of power which existed in 1939. The United States outdistances all the others by far. Then comes Japan, Germany, the USSR, France, and Great Britain. Japan's growth is twice that of Germany, France, and Great Britain, but relative economic forces between the capitalist world and the USSR have resumed their former equilibrium.

The Tastes of the Kremlin

The nationalities problem and the problems which economic centralization pose are generally treated separately in studies of the USSR. This is regrettable because the desire of the Soviet leaders to perserve the tsarist colonies is probably one of the most important contributors to the economic conservatism of the Kremlin. Na-

tionalism is at the heart of the slowdown of the Soviet economy and the breakdown of Soviet society. If the apparatchiki want to turn the USSR into a developed country, they should grant partial or total independence to the Baltic republics, Central Asia, and the Caucasians. Most likely, the Ukraine would soon demand the same. In sum, *the inevitable breakdown of the Soviet system is not a consequence of Communism.* Countries such as China, Cuba, or Viet Nam,* where "legitimate" Communist parties are in power (that is to say not externally imposed), could, if they wanted, decentralize their economy without jeopardizing the integrity of national territory. This is because they have not forcibly annexed numerous national minorities. In fact, the Chinese economy is already less centralized than the Soviet economy.

The Soviet crisis is not the crisis of Communism. It is the crisis of a particular Communist country which had the misfortune of having glutted itself with territory in the past. If the nationalist leaders finally overcome their nationalistic instincts and feeling of humiliation, which could be brought about (or will be brought about) by a retreat from Eastern Europe and the liberation of the nationalities, the *Russian* economy would be able to undertake reform in the manner of Hungary. China—which is isolated from the rest of the world, has no satellites, and is ethnically homogeneous—will never find itself ensconced in a "Soviet-style" crisis. Cut off from the world, it can, if it wants, endure a thousand years of Communism.

There is another thing unique about Russian Communism. It has massacred fifteen to twenty million Soviet citizens. The heavy weight of the past makes the task of the new Soviet class particularly difficult, perhaps even unrelievedly dangerous. The Yugoslavian regime ended up creating a new class just as surely as Bolshevism did. But the absence of massacres and the incontestable national legitimacy of Tito have allowed for a relative amount of liberalization and secured the decentralization of the system.

It is not clear whether or not the Russian leaders are capable of such change. We can hope that the Russian apparatchiki will overcome a) their fascist and autocratic temperament, b) their fear of the Russian people, c) their nationalism, d) and their tendency to wait until it is too late.

*The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. The South, since Liberation, poses a different problem.

The Kremlin has two choices: long-term or short-term "reform."

Long-term reform is the policy now pursued by the Kremlin. Modification of the economic system is preceded by a change in ideology, characterized by de-Marxification, the development of a nationalistic, racist, antisemitic, anti-Chinese climate of opinion, and the Russification of the federated republics. The regime is trying to transform Russian Communism into fascism, understood merely as a totalitarian system with a corresponding ideology. This policy cannot succeed for a very simple reason: because the People's Democracies have already made gains and are now richer than Russia, economic change can no longer be postponed. In five or ten years, the Soviet army's position in the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia will be comparable to an underdeveloped country occupying present-day Western Europe. This would be like the Egyptian army occupying Switzerland, for example. The differences in the standards of living among the Russian and non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union and the satellite countries will be so great that the discontentment of the average Soviet citizen will erupt into pillaging and riots, whether he be part of the occupying forces in Eastern Europe or a proletarian from the Russian provinces.

Short-term reform would require immediate economic changes, the reinforcement of the police machinery, the immediate conversion to unmitigated fascism with its reliance on physical repression to control the effects of independence in the Baltic, Caucasian, and Moslem republics, resulting from decentralization. Short-term reform is not guaranteed success. Its advantage lies in the fact that action will be taken before the police machinery will have completely broken down and that the material deprivations of the Soviet people will not have attained truly dangerous levels.

The USSR finds itself at the beginning of a large-scale regressive cycle, as the rise in infant mortality sufficiently shows. What we do not know is the *speed* and *amplitude* of decomposition. Basically, everyone knows that *it's not going too well in the USSR,* that the Soviet economy has trouble expanding. But no one *dares* even imagine the real extent of their problems. The relaxation of pressure, accompanied by the simultaneous lowering of administrative and industrial productivity (not to mention the agricultural deficits) as a result of centralization is bringing about the *absolute regression* of the national wealth. This is not synonomous with a lowering of the

standard of living. A halt in the growth of a system such as the Soviet Union, in a certain way, automatically guarantees a rise in the real standard of living by decreasing the extent of population displacement and encouraging the parallel handicraft economy. . . . Only medicine suffers absolutely; the rise in the infant mortality race *is* a lowering of the real standard of living. Our secret services should make some effort along sociological lines and keep us informed of their research into the crisis of the Soviet social system. We lack *hard* facts on the breakdown of the KGB, public services, industry, and Soviet agriculture. They should also try to understand the state of mind of the leaders and masses in Russia and the Soviet Union.

Secret services are supposed to guard our security. They spend far too much time, with limited success, in trying to prevent Soviet penetration into the Third World, which we know changes nothing except which local oligarchy will take power. The decomposition or explosion of the second greatest military power in the world is more important for planetary security, for the West as well as the Soviets, than the loyalty of small-scale totalitarianisms in the Third World.

Like the economic growth taking place in Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, and Iran, the crisis of the Soviet Union is, at least for the moment, a nonevent.

Must we continue to overestimate the economic strength of the Soviet Union, like Henry Kissinger does? In Oslo, on May 20, 1976, during a meeting of NATO, the American secretary of state recommended Western allies adopt an attitude of toleration regarding the growing military strength of the USSR. This was, according to him, a natural outgrowth of economic expansion. But in the case of the USSR, the real relationship between economic and military power is reversed. The Soviet Union produces war material because it is incapable of producing butter or automobiles, or any other kind of consumer good. The economic impotence of the centrally controlled Communist system implies military power. We cannot understand how the US Department of State can really take the Soviet economy seriously when we see the Kremlin, scarcely two days after the Oslo meeting, take extraordinary measures to guarantee the gathering of the harvest. These measures give the impression of absolute panic. In regions with an extreme climate such as Western Siberia, Kazakhstan, or Central Asia, an incentive system has been implemented which often pays the operators of agricultural machinery and trucks in kind. It is significant to note that a worker who has agreed to reap

by hand a field which could not be handled by machine can keep one-half of the harvest. We see the Marxist-Leninist version of the medieval *right to every tenth bail,* a characteristic of weakly monetized economies. The regressive, precapitalist mode of Soviet production is more and more in evidence every day.

What is the significance of these urgent measures? Reading between the lines, we see an intensification of the class struggle in the countryside. The regime fears a total strike, a complete withdrawal of the peasants to their individual landholdings. In the rural areas of the Soviet Union, are we today witness to the revenge of her peasantry for forced collectivization, a new confrontation between the people and the state, where the people, for once, have the upper hand? Recent reports indicate the presence of strikes in the spring of 1976. These take a rather diffuse form in the countryside but were present in their more classic and dramatic form in the factories, involving the Soviet working class. These strikes were accompanied by riots against the sorry way things are distributed. The mechanism of a possible crisis is already operative in the USSR. Farm productivity lowers—though structurally caused it can worsen with the climatic problems inevitable over a period of ten or twenty years, which results in the failure to provision cities, leading to strikes, riots . . . and the end of the USSR?

If, in the West, we wish to predict a few months in advance the *year* of the collapse of the system, we should pay strictest attention to the agricultural situation. If the harvest of 1977 is bad, anything is possible. This holds for each year thereafter.

We should hope that the regime will have the courage and boldness to decollectivize in time. If not, it will be up to the West to decide whether this, the first of the Communist systems, will explode or survive. We repeat, we don't want millions of people in the USSR to die, by famine or revolution. We would deliver wheat, even if it means preserving this abominable regime and allowing it to indefinitely rot without exploding. But if we continue to underestimate the Soviet crisis, and consider the military strength of the USSR augmenting as an *inevitable historical consequence of the regime's increasing industrial and economic power,* we risk causing the Soviet system to explode inadvertently, by refusing it aid at the decisive moment.

AFTERWORD

Since the publication of my book in France, the overall situation for the USSR has hardly improved. The years 1977 and 1978 have probably seen an acceleration of the process of decomposition.

Soviet dissidence has become a preoccupation of the media. West of the iron curtain, we have come to conceive of the USSR as a social system in trouble. This perception persists despite a tendency among many to interpret certain indications of difficulty—an explosion in the Moscow subway in January 1977, the bombing of government buildings the same year, the succession of dissident trials in 1978—as plotted by the police. Whatever stability we see in the regime is attributed solely to the KGB, its repressive arm. Such marked indications of discord are putting to the test certain classic analyses, which are predicated on the long-term stability of totalitarian systems. To salvage such analyses one must approach Kremlinology as something out of an espionage novel by John Le Carré.

But there is a simple response to all this, based on sociology and history. As the social system decays, so also does the government apparatus. Each suspected act of intellectual dissidence or of terrorism must be seen in the light of an indisputable and persistent rise in infant mortality, which is as much an indication of a social problem. It is too bad that professional demographers alone see the social significance of this index, which, by itself, is more revealing than a thousand political anecdotes, than a hundred-thousand analyses of Pravda.

On the whole, the internal development of the USSR follows a simple contradiction: an economic and political paralysis has not slowed down a general cultural progress, as indicated by a popular thirst for the printed word and the ever-increasing quality of dissident analyses of Soviet society. Stated in the most general way, the Soviet crisis consists in the clash between an expanding mass consciousness and a declining economic and political system.

In matters of foreign policy, the climate has become even more hostile for the USSR than at the time *The Final Fall* was first pub-

lished in France. Unlike the immediate aftermath of Prague, the satellites are no longer clear and unthreatening areas. Intellectual dissidence is again on the rise in Poland, not unexpectedly. But what is surprising is that it is also present in Czechoslovakia, the GDR, and, to a lesser extent, Rumania.

Czechoslovakia is slowly waking up from the torpor induced by 1968. The appearance of dissidence in the GDR—a cautious country and a model for the sphere—is surely the most interesting phenomenon. Clearly, Poland will continue to be the most liberal country among them, having largely surpassed Hungary as far as political toleration goes. It is rapidly becoming what certain dissidents have called "pluralism with a totalitarian face."[1] The economic picture is less distinguished. Despite the radical decollectivization of agriculture, the Polish economy is far from having achieved the efficiency of Hungary's "New Economic System."

Despite Hungary and Bulgaria, intellectual dissidence is strikingly transnational. The synchronization of protests throughout the People's Democracies and the Soviet Union reveals a vitality and efficiency totally absent in the fifties and sixties. The coordination of the themes of protest, oriented around the most universal claims—for example, the Rights of Man—is equally striking. This emphasis on immediate moral claims over the long-term construction of abstract social and economic models represents a turn to realism. It is no longer a question of building an ideal society, but rather of protecting basic liberties, an objective much easier to formulate. The socialist camp has belatedly become the heir of Enlightenment doctrines elaborated from Locke to Voltaire.

Even in the USSR, the quality of the critique of the current system is rapidly progressing. Two very important works should be mentioned. *Un socialisme de type non-totalitare est-il possible? (Is a Non-Totalitarian Form of Socialism Possible?),* by Yuri Orlov, is an austere analysis of the incompatibility between centralized planning and political liberalism.[2] Orlov does not rest much hope on such appealing and unrealistic formulas as Workers' Control, but rather on a decentralization of economic decision making that leaves a measure of autonomy, i.e., liberty, to the administrators of industrial enterprises. It is not idealism that prompts Orlov but a desire to elaborate an economic system which functions smoothly and lets liberty establish itself first in the play of economic relations, then political.

Le phenomene socialiste (The Socialist Phenomenon), by Igor Shafarevich, is an unsparingly critical comparative analysis of socialist systems seen throughout history.[3] Communism appears as the particular expression of a universal totalitarian thought, present in the Incan Empire as well as in the abstract construction of Plato's *Republic.*

Soviet dissidents can no longer be considered naive, idealistic dreamers. Knowledge, intelligence, and competence now characterize their approach to the absurd system that is the USSR.

As far as ethical choice is concerned, dissidents in the Soviet Union and its satellites seem to be in accord. However, their harmony is not so pronounced in social and economic matters. Thus, Orlov in the above mentioned essay, comes out for a decentralized but socialistic economic system, abandoning authoritarian planning but maintaining the collective ownership of the means of production. He refers to the West and Yugoslavia, but seems unaware of the fact that the system he advocates is, by and large, Hungary's "New Economic System," already operative behind the "lead curtain" that separates the USSR from its satellites. Progress in communicating social and economic experience will likely be rapid in the future, despite obstacles. Vladimir Bukovski, in a recent interview, seems aware of the relevance for Soviet critics of models developed, either by design or not, in the satellites. Speaking of the opposition of certain high Soviet functionaries to their own regime, he suggests that the new generation of apparatchiki could very well take such Eastern European countries as Poland or Yugoslavia as a model.

The world economic crisis has certainly restrained the economic development of the People's Democracies. The smaller countries in the Soviet sphere, more advanced and more open to the outside world than the power which occupies them, have been affected by the rise in prices of raw materials and by inflation imported from the West.

For its part, the Soviet Union has been protected, on the whole, by its insularity and its economic lethargy. She has certainly suffered less, thanks to her very backwardness and her abundance of raw materials. All this puts a brake on the widening gap in the relative standards of living between the USSR and the People's Democracies. The effects of this long-term factor of instability have been weakened. However, the satellite countries could themselves suffer the social and political consequences of economic difficulties. The frus-

tration of rising expectations, which appeared to be on the point of satisfaction, could contribute to the political destabilization of the bloc.

The election of Jimmy Carter as president of the United States is a new source of difficulty for the Soviet regime. The new American team is not the prisoner of Kissingerian dreaming, of a conception of equilibrium inherited from the nineteenth century, which does not take sufficient account of the differences between social systems and their ideological incompatibility. In the long run, global coexistence of liberty and servitude is impossible in any century, as it was in the United States in the last century with a democracy in the North and slavery in the South.

This time, the resolution of the conflict will not be by war. The unpredictable outcome of the use of nuclear weapons works against the conventional military imagination. But the conflict cannot be papered over by a simple accord between tolerant and understanding diplomats. No matter how sly, not even a new Kissinger would be able to prevent the Soviet citizens from dreaming of the West as a promised land.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, foreign affairs advisor to President Carter, is a Sovietologist and sociologist. Intellectually, he is opposed to Kissinger. His works show him capable of conceiving and analyzing the problems of the USSR. Without, perhaps, seeing the likelihood of the collapse of the system, he seems aware of an institutional, political, and economic paralysis. Behind the resolve of President Carter in his dealings with the Kremlin, there are ethical and humanitarian considerations. There is, without doubt, something else reassuring—a correct evaluation of the relative strength of the two superpowers, of which one is becoming less and less super, despite what Soviet attempts at penetration in Africa might suggest.

It is certainly too soon to judge the validity of the predictions advanced in *The Final Fall*. But, for the moment, nothing invalidates it. The decomposition of the Soviet sphere continues.

August 1978

NOTES

Introduction

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2. On the state of sociological and historical knowledge at the time of Marx, see E. J. Hobsbawm, Introduction to Karl Marx's *Precapitalist Economic Formations* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1964).
3. Andrei Sakharov, *My Country and The World* (New York: Knopf, 1975).
4. For a treatment of this problem from an orthodox Communist viewpoint, see Marie Lavigne's book, *Soviet and European Socialist Economics* (Paris: Armand Colin), Appendix, pp. 240–43. For an opposite viewpoint, Peter Wiles explains quite well in *The Political Economy of Communism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962) how certain statistical techniques have allowed for the consistent overestimation of the growth of the Soviet economy.
5. *Population,* a special edition on the population of the USSR, June 1958. Note the article by Jean Buraben, "Essay on the Demographic Development of the USSR," pp. 29–62.
6. Paul Paillat and Alfred Savvy, "The Population of China: Evolution and Perspectives," *Population* (May–June 1974).
7. Hugh Trevor-Roper employs the classic talents of the historian in his *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (London: Macmillan, 1967). See a less conventional study, *The Last Days of Hitler* (New York, 3rd edition, 1962).
8. All this applies equally to China. On the model cities and towns in the Chinese Communist system, see Simon Leys, *Chinese Shadows* (Paris: U.G.E., 1974.

Part I

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3. Hilaire Belloc, *The Servile State* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1946).
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5. Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft (Economy and Society)* (1921).
6. J. K. Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (London: Hamilton, 1967).
7. Milovan Djilas, *The New Class* (New York: Praeger, 1957).
8. On Poland see Stanislaw Ossowski, *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness* (Paris: Anthropos, 1971).
9. Gilles Martinet, *Five Communisms* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971).
10. Eugene Zamiatin, *We* (New York: Dutton, 1924).
11. George Orwell, *1984* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1949).
12. On official wealth in the Eastern European countries see David Lane, *The End of Inequality?* (London: Penguin, 1971); Marie Lavigne, *Soviet and European Socialist Economies* (Paris: Armond Colin, 1970), pp. 320–35.
13. Roy Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy* (Paris: Grasset, 1972), p. 268.
14. "Die priviligierte Klasse," *Der Spiegel,* 23 February 1976.
15. *Report of the Commission on Social Inequality,* 1975. This was the basis for the original goals of the Seventh Plan (Meraud Report), CERC's estimate, p. 15.
16. A. Besançon, *A Short Treatise on Sovietology Using Civilian, Military, and Religious Authorities* (Paris: Hackette, 1976).
17. J. F. Revel, *The Totalitarian Temptation* (New York: Doubleday, 1977).
18. Cf. p. 29.
19. Frederic Bon and Michel-Antoine Burnier, *The Working Class and Revolution* (Paris: Seuil, 1971).
20. Milovan Djilas, *Conversations With Stalin* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1962).

21. Claude Weisz and Eva November, *Toward What Kind of Socialism is Hungary Headed?* produced by Service Audio-visual, *Le Monde/Le Sevit.*
22. F. Fejto, *History of the People's Democracies,* Vol. II (Paris: Seuil), p. 330.
23. M. Chrestien, *The Red Laugh* (Paris: Gallimond, 1961), p. 30.
24. There are several lucid Western economic analyses of Communist systems. For example, P. Kende, *The Logic of a Centralized Economy* (Paris: SEDES, 1964), and Peter Wiles, *Political Economy of Communism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962). These two works speak of the centralized economy as it is, not as it should be.
25. Peter Wiles, *Political Economy of Communism.*
26. *The U.S.S.R. Statistically* (Editions de Moscow, 1973), p. 35.
27. Ibid, p. 85.
28. Cf. E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Peasants of Languedoc*; G. Duby, *The Rural Economy and Life in the Country in the Medieval West* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1962); G. Fourquin, *Economic History of the Medieval West* (Paris: Armond Colin, 1969).
29. David Lane, *The End of Inequality,* p. 61.
30. Marie Lavigne, *Soviet and European Socialist Economies,* p. 210.
31. *Le Monde,* 9 December 1975.
32. Ibid.
33. On the Asiatic mode of production and Communism, see Miklos Molnar, *Marx, Engels and International Politics* (Paris: Gallimond, 1975); Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1964). For an example of historical analysis in which the problems of the Communist economy are indirectly illuminated, see Witold Kula, *The Economic Theory of the Feudal System* (Paris-La Haye: Mouton, 1970). Stanislaw Ossinski emphasizes, in *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness,* the similarities between Stalinism and the centralized feudalism of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (p. 195). Poland passed almost immediately from feudalism to Stalinism. Sociologists and historians pay particular attention to the relationship between Communism and precapitalist modes of production.

34. Agricultural Backwardness in the Soviet Union

	Use of Chemical Fertilizer 1966–67 (kg/ha)	Production of Wheat (100 kg/ha)
USSR	25.8	11.6
Bulgaria	97.5	30.6
Czechoslovakia	172.7	27.1
GDR	279.0	37.8
Hungary	68.6	25.9
Poland	100.9	22.4
Rumania	32.0	20.0

Source: E. M. Jacobs, "Ownership and Planning in Soviet and East European Agriculture," in *The Prediction of Communist Economic Performance*, ed. P. J. D. Wiles (Cambridge University Press, 1971).

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36. On the economic difficulties of the People's Democracies, see the article by David Lascelles, "Hard Times as Comecon Goes into the Red," *Financial Times,* 6 October 1975.
37. On the contrast between the USSR and Eastern Europe, particularly see Alec Nove, *Economic Reform in the U.S.S.R. and Hungary: A Study in Contrasts in Socialist Economics* (London: Penguin, 1972); and Alec Nove and D. M. Nuti, eds., *Socialist Economics.*
38. Interview with Mihail Chemiakin by Jean-Pierre Cerquant and Claude Day, *Playboy,* January 1976 (French edition).
39. *Le Monde,* 30 December 1975.

40. F. Fejto, *History of the People's Democracies,* Vol. II., pp. 333–34.
41. J. F. Revel, *The Totalitarian Temptation,* (Paris: Laffont, 1976), p. 226.
42. See the collection of articles by Peter Wiles, *The Prediction of Communist Economic Performance* (Cambridge, 1971). This book contains predictions dating from 1967, with subsequent appraisals on the short-term growth (one to four years) of the USSR, the People's Democracies, Albania, and China. These econometric models are a little suspect because they treat socio-political factors as adventitious variables, which are therefore unpredictable, especially in *the short run.* To be sound, economic predictions involving Communist countries must: 1) treat Russian statistics with skepticism; 2) systematically integrate socio-political factors; 3) prefer the long to the short run.
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45. Andreas Hegedus, ed., *Sociological Studies of Hungary* (Paris, Budapest: Anthropos, 1969).
46. Ibid., p. 261.
47. For a masterful analysis of the error of Marx and Depression era Communists, see F. Bon and J. M. Burnier, *The Working Class and Revolution* (Paris: Seuil, 1971).
48. I. Friss, ed., *Reform of the Economic Mechanism in Hungary,* pp. 11–39.
49. See the collection, *Rumanian Science Fiction,* with an introduction by Vladimir Colin (Paris: Marabout, 1975).
50. John Lukacs, *The Historical Novel* (London: Merlin Press, 1962).

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2. Ibid, p. 12.
3. E. Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (London: Faber, 1969).

4. Cf. Rene Durmont and Bernard Rosier, *We Are Moving Toward Famine* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), note 1, p. 115.
5. Alec Nove, *Economic Reform in the U.S.S.R. and Hungary: A Study in Contrasts,* p. 360.
6. Philippe Le fournier, "How Moscow Sees the Crisis," *Expansion,* September 1975, has useful information on the real opinions of the apparatchiki-economists, including such important personages as Nikolai Inozerntsev, vice-president of Gosplan.
7. Henry A. Kissinger, *Toward a New American Foreign Policy* (Paris: Fayard, 1970), p. 39; U.S. edition, *American Foreign Policy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969).
8. See especially Francois Fejto, *History of the People's Democracies,* Vol. II, p. 364.
9. David Lane, *The End of Inequality,* pp. 79–86.
10. Solzhenitsyn, *Letter to the Leaders of the Soviet Union* (Paris: Seuil, 1974).
11. Paul Lendvai, *Anti-Semitism Without Jews* (Paris: Fayard, 1971), p. 9. (Translated from the U.S. edition.)
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13. Harold Wilson, *The Labor Government, 1964–1970* (London: Penguin, 1971), pp. 278 and 619.
14. A. Sakharov, *My Country and the World* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), p. 21.
15. See interview with Chemiakin by J. P. Cerquant and C. L. Day in *Playboy,* January 1976; this is confirmed by numerous reports of Western tourists.
16. See especially Solzhenitsyn, *Letter to the Leaders of the Soviet Union.*
17. On suicide in Hungary, see Lazlo Cseh-Szombathy, "Az öngyilkossag tarsadalmi jellege" ("The Social Aspects of Suicide"), *Demografia,* 1963 VI-2; in Czechoslovakia, see Ladislav Ruzicka, "Az öngyilkossagok alakulasa csehszlovakiaban" ("The Suicide Trend in Czechoslovakia"), *Demografia,* 1967 X-3-4. *Demographia* is an excellent Hungarian magazine which deals with demographic matters, as its name indicates. For suicide in Poland, see Brunon Hoylst, "Study of the Problem of Suicides in Poland," *Review of the Institute of Sociology,* no. 4 1969.
18. Laszlo Cseh-Szombathy, "Az öngyilkossag tarsadalmi jellege," *Demografia,* 1963, VI-2, p. 190, Table 3.

19. F. Fejto, *History of the People's Democracies,* Vol. II, p. 342 .
20. Andrei Amalrik, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (New York, 1970.)
21. Roy Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy,* p. 363.
22. See the texts of Engels and Zola on the European working class in the nineteenth century: Frederick Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844;* Emile Zola, *Germinal.*
23. G. Gorer and J. Rickman, *The People of Great Russia: A Psychological Study* (London, 1949).
24. Romila Thapar, *A History of India* (London: Pelican, 1966).
25. Edmond Luttwak, *Coup d' Etat* (London: Penguin Press, 1968).
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29. Amalrik in *L'Express,* 14–20 June 1976.
30. D. Valentey, "The Demographic Problems of the Soviet Union," *Population,* March–April 1970, pp. 363–72.
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32. Gyorgy Vikar, "The Budapest School," *Critique,* March 1976.
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34. Paul Lendvai, *Anti-Semitism Without Jews.*
35. Ibid., pp. 13, 20.
36. Ibid., pp. 24–25
37. In *Les Juifs en Union soviétique (The Jews in the Soviet Union)* 22 (February 1976):1.
38. Boris Penson, "A Small Report on the Camps of Mordovie," *Les Juifs en Union soviétique* 22 (February 1976):12 and 13.
39. D. Lane, *The End of Inequality,* pp. 91–99.
40. "Soviet Youth and the Apprenticeship of Social Life," *French Documents,* 1975; political and social problems.
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48. Example: *The E.E.C. and Eastern Europe,* documents of the European Economic Community, Information, 1975.

Afterword

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2. Yuri Orlov, "Is a Non-Totalitarian Form of Socialism Possible?" *Samizdat Notebook* 37 (June-July 1976).
3. Igor Shafarevich, *Le phenomene socialiste* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1977).

EMMANUEL
TODD

la chute finale

ESSAI SUR LA DÉCOMPOSITION
DE LA SPHÈRE SOVIÉTIQUE

ROBERT LAFFONT

Emmanuel Todd (ph. Anaïk Frantz)

"Quoi qu'on en dise, la crise du communisme était prévisible, puisqu'elle a été prévue. Je connais au moins deux essais qui avaient parfaitement discerné l'enchevêtrement des causes de la situation actuelle.

Le premier, *l'Union soviétique survivra-t-elle en 1984 ?*, d'Andrei Amalrik — qui fit grand bruit quand, en 1970, il parvint en Occident — prévoyait que l'URSS, dont le système politique sclérosé empêchait le développement économique, et que minaient les contradictions croissantes entre une nation russe dominatrice et des nations asservies, se désagrégerait par implosion.

Un jeune Français, sans expérience directe de l'URSS, parvenait, en 1976, par la simple ressource d'une véritable culture et d'un esprit libre, à des conclusions similaires. Pour Emmanuel Todd, dans *La Chute finale*, le communisme entrait dans une phase décisive d'instabilité à cause de son échec économique. L'URSS, "esclavagiste" dans les villes et "féodale" dans les campagnes, était totalement improductive et ne pouvait augmenter son rendement, parce que ses travailleurs se trouvaient en état de légitime défense face à l'oppression constante qu'ils subissaient.

Dès lors, l'histoire devait se dérouler en trois phases : 1) la stagnation économique ; 2) le pourrissement idéologique ; 3) le pourrissement de l'appareil d'Etat. Du blocage économique, accentué par l'écart grandissant avec l'Occident, on passerait nécessairement à une crise politique. Au cours des années 70, l'URSS traversait la phase 2 et connaissait les signes annonciateurs de la phase 3, à laquelle elle est désormais parvenue.

D'ailleurs, Gorbatchev a entrepris — non sans mal — de suivre les recommandations que le très jeune Todd formulait pour les princes qui gouverneraient la Russie : 1) s'établir solidement au pouvoir ; 2) accroître le niveau de vie en prenant le risque politique du marché et de la décollectivisation ; 3) admettre l'incompatibilité du parti unique avec la société de consommation et celle de l'empire avec la décentralisation ; 4) renoncer à la doctrine Brejnev et laisser dériver l'Europe centrale vers l'Ouest. L'Histoire dira bientôt si cette politique peut réussir et ce qu'il adviendra de Gorbatchev et du communisme."

Jean-Claude Casanova, *L'Express*, 2 février 1990

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